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THE POEMS OF
JOHN DRYDEN

EDITED WITH A MEMOIR

BY

ROBERT BELL

VOLUME II.



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POEMS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN.

THE MEDAL.

A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION.

[THIS bitter satire, devoted exclusively to Shaftesbury, was published in March, 1682. The victory obtained by the Whigs, through the dismissal of the bill of indictment, was celebrated in various modes of exultation, and amongst the rest by a medal representing on one side the head of Shaftesbury, and on the other a view of London from the old bridge, with the sun rising over the Tower, the date of his acquittal beneath, 24th November, 1681, and above the legend 'Lætamur.' 'In the representation of your own hero,' says Dryden, in his dedication of the poem to the Whigs, 'tis the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little. None of your ornaments are wanting; neither the landscape of your Tower, nor the rising sun, nor the *Anno Domini* of your new sovereign's coronation.* It has neither the breadth, nor variety, of *Absalom and Achitophel*; but the satire is more condensed and ferocious. Shaftesbury is here literally slaughtered piecemeal. It is the most savage of all Dryden's performances in this way, and may possibly have had its share in driving Shaftesbury upon those desperate courses which ended soon afterwards in his ruin. The violent proceedings of the court had crushed the liberties of the people. The chartered rights of corporations were declared void, juries were

* The whole dedication is written in the same spirit of contempt and invective. No expression is too virulent for Shaftesbury and the Whigs.

overawed and corrupted, parliaments were set aside, and the king held at his mercy the lives and properties of all who attempted to resist his tyranny. Shaftesbury, who had shut himself up in his house in Aldersgate-street, calculated upon nothing short of a revolution, and, relying upon his influence in the city, was prepared to place himself at the head of 10,000 malcontents, who, he declared, were 'ready to act at the motion of his finger.' But Monmouth and the leaders of the Whigs refused to co-operate with him, and, having thus committed himself to an imminent and fruitless peril, he fled to Amsterdam, where he died in the following January.

The subject of the *Medal* is said to have been suggested to Dryden by the king, as they were walking together in the Mall. When the poem was finished Dryden took it to his majesty, and received a hundred broad pieces for his pains. This anecdote is recorded by Spence, on the authority of the priest already alluded to. But as we know nothing of the priest, or where he got his information, the authenticity of the story is open to suspicion.]

AN EPISTLE TO THE WHIGS.

FOR to whom can I dedicate this poem, with so much justice as to you? It is the representation of your own hero: It is the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little. None of your ornaments are wanting; neither the landscape of your Tower, nor the rising sun, nor the *Anno Domini* of your new sovereign's coronation. This must needs be a grateful undertaking to your whole party: especially to those who have not been so happy as to purchase the original. I hear the graver has made a good market of it: all his kings are bought up already; or the value of the remainder so enhanced, that many a poor Polander who would be glad to worship the image, is not able to go to the cost of him, but must be content to see him here. I must confess I am no great artist; but sign-post painting will serve the turn to remember a friend by, especially when better is not to be had. Yet, for your comfort, the lineaments are true; and though he sat not five times to me, as he did to B.,*

* Bower, the artist who engraved the medal.

yet I have consulted history, as the Italian painters do, when they would draw a Nero or a Caligula; though they have not seen the man, they can help their imagination by a statue of him, and find out the colouring from Suetonius and Tacitus. Truth is, you might have spared one side of your medal: the head would be seen to more advantage if it were placed on a spike of the tower, a little nearer to the sun, which would then break out to better purpose.

You tell us in your preface to the *No-Protestant Plot*,* that you shall be forced hereafter to leave off your modesty: I suppose you mean that little which is left you; for it was worn to rags when you put out this medal. Never was there practised such a piece of notorious impudence in the face of an established government. I believe when he is dead you will wear him in thumb-rings, as the Turks did Scanderbeg, as if there were virtue in his bones to preserve you against monarchy. Yet, all this while you pretend not only zeal for the public good, but a due veneration for the person of the king. But all men who can see an inch before them, may easily detect those gross fallacies. That it is necessary for men in your circumstances to pretend both, is granted you; for without them there could be no ground to raise a faction. But I would ask you one civil question: What right has any man among you, or any association of men, (to come nearer to you,) who, out of parliament, cannot be considered in a public capacity, to meet, as you daily do, in factious clubs, to vilify the government in your discourses, and to libel it in all your writings? Who made you judges in Israel? Or how is it consistent with your zeal for the public welfare, to promote sedition? Does your definition of loyal, which is to serve the king according to the laws, allow you the licence of traducing the executive power with which you own he is invested? You complain that his majesty has lost the love and confidence of his people; and, by your very urging it, you endeavour what in you lies to make him lose them. All good subjects abhor the thought of arbitrary power, whether it be in one or many: if you were the patriots you would seem, you would not at this rate incense the multitude to assrme it; for no sober man can fear it, either from the king's disposition or his practice; or even where you

* A pamphlet vindicating Lord Shaftesbury from being concerned in any plotting designs against the king. It was published in two parts: the first in 1681, the second in 1682. Wood says, the general report was, that it was written by the earl himself; and that his servant, who put it into the printer's hands, was committed to prison.

would odiously lay it, from his ministers. Give us leave to enjoy the government and benefit of laws under which we were born, and which we desire to transmit to our posterity. You are not the trustees of the public liberty: and if you have not right to petition in a crowd, much less have you to intermeddle in the management of affairs, or to arraign what you do not like; which in effect is everything that is done by the king and council. Can you imagine that any reasonable man will believe you respect the person of his majesty, when it is apparent that your seditious pamphlets are stuffed with particular reflections on him? If you have the confidence to deny this, it is easy to be evinced from a thousand passages, which I only forbear to quote, because I desire they should die, and be forgotten. I have perused many of your papers: and to show you that I have, the third part of your *No-Protestant Plot** is, much of it, stolen from your dead author's pamphlet, called the *Growth of Popery*,† as manifestly as Milton's *Defence of the English People* is from Buchanan, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*: or your *First Covenant* and *New Association* from the *Holy League* of the French Guisards. Any one who reads Davila, may trace your practices all along. There were the same pretences for reformation and loyalty, the same aspersions of the king, and the same grounds of a rebellion. I know not whether you will take the historian's word, who says it was reported that Poltrot, a Huguenot, murdered Francis, duke of Guise, by the instigations of Theodore Beza; or, that it was a Huguenot minister, otherwise called a Presbyterian (for our church abhors so devilish a tenet) who first writ a treatise of the lawfulness of deposing and murdering kings of a different persuasion in religion:

* Derrick tells us that the third part of this pamphlet, printed in quarto, was supposed to have been written by Ferguson, under Shaftesbury's directions. It refers chiefly to the proceedings against him on points of high treason, and aims at weakening the charges, by casting the most odious imputations on the character of the witnesses.

† Written by Marvell, and published a little before his death in 1678. A second part was written by Ferguson. Derrick says, that in consequence of this production and other 'seditious' writings and practices, a demand was made of the States of Holland to surrender the person of Ferguson, who was then at Brill, but that it was refused, although the States had not long before, on a similar demand, given up Sir Thomas Armstrong. There may have been a secret understanding respecting Ferguson, notwithstanding all this show of persecution; for when Ferguson was afterwards implicated in the Rye-House Plot, the Secretary of State, upon issuing orders for the seizure of the rest of the conspirators, privately instructed the messenger to let Ferguson escape.

but I am able to prove, from the doctrine of Calvin, and the principles of Buchanan, that they set the people above the magistrate; which, if I mistake not, is your own fundamental, and which carries your loyalty no farther than your liking. When a vote of the House of Commons goes on your side, you are as ready to observe it as if it were passed into a law; but when you are pinched with any former and yet unrepealed act of parliament, you declare that, in some cases, you will not be obliged by it. The passage is in the same third part of the *No-Protestant Plot*, and is too plain to be denied. The late copy of your intended association, you neither wholly justify nor condemn; but, as the Papists, when they are unopposed, fly out into all the pageantries of worship, but in times of war, when they are hard pressed by arguments, lie close intrenched behind the Council of Trent: so now, when your affairs are in a low condition, you dare not pretend that to be a legal combination; but whensoever you are afloat, I doubt not but it will be maintained and justified to purpose. For, indeed, there is nothing to defend it but the sword. It is the proper time to say anything when men have all things in their power.

In the mean time, you would fain be nibbling at a parallel betwixt this association and that in the time of Queen Elizabeth.* But there is this small difference betwixt them, that the ends of the one are directly opposite to the other: one with the queen's approbation and conjunction, as head of it; the other, without either the consent or knowledge of the king, against whose authority it is manifestly designed. Therefore, you do well to have recourse to your last evasion,—that it was contrived by your enemies, and shuffled into the papers that were seized; which yet you see the nation is not so easy to believe as your own jury.† But the matter is not difficult, to find twelve men in Newgate who would acquit a malefactor.

I have only one favour to desire of you at parting,—that when you think of answering this poem, you would employ the same pens against it, who have combated with so much success against

* When England, in the sixteenth century, was supposed in danger from the designs of Spain, the principal people, with the queen at their head, entered into an association for the defence of their country, and of the Protestant religion, against Popery, invasion, and innovation.—DERRICK.

† The draught of the association alluded to was found amongst Shaftesbury's papers, and his friend insinuated that it was placed there by the person who seized it to give greater force to the accusations against him. The jury wholly discredited the witnesses.

Absalom and Achitophel; for then you may assure yourselves of a clear victory, without the least reply. Rail at me abundantly; and, not to break a custom, do it without wit. By this method you will gain a considerable point, which is, wholly to waive the answer of my arguments. Never own the bottom of your principles, for fear they should be treason. Fall severely on the miscarriages of government: for, if scandal be not allowed, you are no freeborn subjects. If God has not blessed you with the talent of rhyming, make use of my poor stock, and welcome: let your verses run upon my feet; and, for the utmost refuge of notorious blockheads, reduced to the last extremity of sense, turn my own lines upon me; and, in utter despair of your own satire, make me satirize myself. Some of you have been driven to this bay already; but, above all the rest, commend me to the Nonconformist parson, who writ the *Whip and Key*. I am afraid it is not read so much as the piece deserves, because the bookseller is every week crying help at the end of his gazette, to get it off. You see I am charitable enough to do him a kindness, that it may be published as well as printed; and that so much skill in Hebrew derivations may not lie for wastepaper in the shop. Yet I half suspect he went no farther for his learning, than the index of Hebrew names and etymologies, which is printed at the end of some English bibles. If Achitophel signify the brother of a fool, the author of that poem will pass with his readers for the next of kin. And perhaps it is the relation that makes the kindness. Whatever the verses are, buy them up, I beseech you, out of pity; for I hear the conventicle is shut up, and the brother of Achitophel out of service.*

Now footmen you know have the generosity to make a purse for a member of their society, who has had his livery pulled over his ears; and even protestant socks are bought up among you out of veneration to the name. A dissenter in poetry from sense and English will make as good a protestant rhymers, as a dissenter from the church of England a protestant parson. Besides, if you encourage a young beginner, who knows but he may elevate his style a little above the vulgar epithets of profane, and saucy Jack, and atheistical scribbler, with which he treats me, when the fit of enthusiasm is strong upon him; by which well-mannered and charitable expressions I was certain of his sect before I knew his name. What would you have more of a man? He has damned

* George Cooper, Esq., brother to the Earl of Shaftesbury, was married to a daughter of Alderman Oldfield; and, being settled in the city, became a great man among the Whigs.

me in your cause from Genesis to the Revelations: and has half the texts of both the Testaments against me, if you will be so civil to yourselves as to take him for your interpreter; and not to take them for Irish witnesses. After all, perhaps you will tell me, that you retained him only for the opening of your cause, and that your main lawyer is yet behind. Now, if it so happen he meet with no more reply than his predecessors, you may either conclude that I trust to the goodness of my cause, or fear my adversary, or disdain him, or what you please, for the short of it is, it is indifferent to your humble servant, whatever your party says or thinks of him.

THE MEDAL.

A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION.

*Per Graiũm populos mediæque per Elidis urbem
Ibat ovans, Divũque sibi poscebat honores.*

OF all our antic sights and pageantry,
Which English idiots run in crowds to see,
The Polish Medal bears the prize alone: *
A monster, more the favourite of the town
Than either fairs or theatres have shown.
Never did art so well with nature strive,
Nor ever idol seemed so much alive;
So like the man, so golden to the sight, †
So base within, so counterfeit and light.
One side is filled with title and with face;
And, lest the king should want a legal place,
On the reverse, a tower the town surveys,
O'er which our mounting sun his beams displays.
The word, pronounced aloud by shrieval voice,
Lætatur, which, in Polish, is Rejoice.

* There was an absurd joke got up against Shaftesbury, that he had entertained some hope of being elected king of Poland. This ridiculous jest was made the subject of numerous squibs and lampoons, and he was commonly designated in the broadsheets, Anthony, and sometimes Tony, king of Poland.

† It can hardly be supposed that Dryden had never seen Shaftesbury, yet he leads us to infer as much in the Dedication: 'Though he sat not five times to me, as he did to B., &c.'

The day, month, year, to the great act are joined :
 And a new canting holiday designed.
 Five days he sat, for every cast and look,
 Four more than God to finish Adam took.*
 But who can tell what essence angels are?
 Or how long Heaven was making Lucifer?
 Oh, could the style that copied every grace,
 And ploughed such furrows for an eunuch face,
 Could it have formed his ever-changing will,
 The various piece had tired the graver's skill!
 A martial hero first, with early care,
 Blown, like a pigmy by the winds, to war.
 A beardless chief, a rebel, ere a man;
 So young his hatred to his prince began.
 Next this,—how wildly will ambition steer
 A vermin wriggling in the usurper's ear.
 Bartering his venal wit for sums of gold,
 He cast himself into the saint-like mould;
 Groaned, sighed, and prayed, while godliness was gain,
 The loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train.
 But, as 'tis hard to cheat a juggler's eyes,
 His open lewdness he could ne'er disguise.
 There split the saint; for hypocritic zeal
 Allows no sins but those it can conceal.
 Whoring to scandal gives too large a scope;
 Saints must not trade, but they may interlope:
 The ungodly principle was all the same;
 But a gross cheat betrays his partner's game.
 Besides, their pace was formal, grave, and slack;
 His nimble wit outran the heavy pack;

* Dr. J. Warton justly objects to the offensive profanity of this line, and to that which closely follows,

' Or how long Heaven was making Lucifer?'

Also the line which occurs later in the poem—

' His thunder could they shun,

He should be forced to crown another son.'

There are too many lines of this kind in the *Medal*; and they are amongst the blots which Dryden in his latter years deeply regretted, and would willingly have removed.

Yet still he found his fortune at a stay,
Whole droves of blockheads choking up his way ;
They took, but not rewarded, his advice ;
Villain and wit exact a double price.
Power was his aim ; but thrown from that pretence,
The wretch turned loyal in his own defence,
And malice reconciled him to his prince.
Him in the anguish of his soul he served ;
Rewarded faster still than he deserved.
Behold him now exalted into trust ;
His counsel's oft convenient, seldom just ;
Even in the most sincere advice he gave,
He had a grudging still to be a knave.
The frauds he learned in his fanatic years
Made him uneasy in his lawful gears.
At best, as little honest as he could,
And, like white witches, mischievously good ;*
To his first bias longingly he leans,
And rather would be great by wicked means.
Thus framed for ill, he loosed our triple hold ;
Advice unsafe, precipitous, and bold.
From hence those tears ! that Ilium of our woe !
Who helps a powerful friend, fore-arms a foe.
What wonder if the waves prevail so far,
When he cut down the banks that made the bar ?
Seas follow but their nature, to invade ;
But he, by art, our native strength betrayed.
So Samson to his foe his force confessed,
And, to be shorn, lay slumbering on her breast.
But when this fatal counsel, found too late,
Exposed its author to the public hate ;
When his just sovereign, by no impious way
Could be seduced to arbitrary sway ;
Forsaken of that hope, he shifts his sail,

* The comparison of his best and most politic counsels to the cures effected by those called *white witches*, whom it was unlawful to consult, because, even in accomplishing innocent purposes, they used *infernal arts*, is poignantly severe.—SCOTT.

Drives down the current with a popular gale,
 And shows the fiend confessed without a veil.
 He preaches to the crowd, that power is lent,
 But not conveyed, to kingly government;
 That claims successive bear no binding force;
 That coronation oaths are things of course;
 Maintains the multitude can never err;
 And sets the people in the papal chair.
 The reason's obvious,—interest never lies;
 The most have still their interest in their eyes;
 The power is always theirs, and power is ever wise.
 Almighty crowd! thou shortenest all dispute;
 Power is thy essence; wit thy attribute!
 Nor faith nor reason make thee at a stay;
 Thou leap'st o'er all eternal truths in thy Pindaric way!*
 Athens, no doubt, did righteously decide,
 When Phocion and when Socrates were tried;
 As righteously they did those dooms repent;
 Still they were wise, whatever way they went:
 Crowds err not, though to both extremes they run;
 To kill the father, and recal the son.
 Some think the fools were most as times went then,
 But now the world's o'erstocked with prudent men.
 The common cry is even religion's test,—
 The Turk's is at Constantinople best,
 Idols in India, Popery at Rome,
 And our own worship only true at home.
 And true but for the time, 'tis hard to know
 How long we please it shall continue so;

* Dryden was unmercifully attacked and ridiculed for this monster line. Scott quotes a passage from Hicokeringell which makes lumbering work of it. Another illustration he gives is more curious. The same circumstance is noticed by Tom Brown, who says 'it is the longest line in Christendom, except one, which went round some old hangings, representing the history of Pharaoh and Moses, and measured forty-six good feet of metre, running thus :—

'Why, was he not a rascal,
 Who refused to suffer the children of Israel to go into the wilderness,
 with their wives and families, to eat the paschal?'

This side to-day, and that to-morrow burns;
So all are God-Almighties in their turns.*
A tempting doctrine, plausible and new;
What fools our fathers were, if this be true!
Who, to destroy the seeds of civil war,
Inherent right in monarchs did declare;
And, that a lawful power might never cease,
Secured succession, to secure our peace.
Thus property and sovereign sway, at last,
In equal balances were justly cast;
But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouthed horse,
Instructs the beast to know his native force,
To take the bit between his teeth, and fly
To the next headlong steep of anarchy.
Too happy England, if our good we knew,
Would we possess the freedom we pursue!
The lavish government can give no more;
Yet we repine, and plenty makes us poor.
God tried us once; our rebel fathers fought;
He glutted them with all the power they sought:
Till, mastered by their own usurping brave,
The free-born subject sunk into a slave.
We loathe our manna, and we long for quails;
Ah, what is man, when his own wish prevails!
How rash, how swift to plunge himself in ill,
Proud of his power, and boundless in his will!
That kings can do no wrong, we must believe;
None can they do, and must they all receive?
Help, heaven! or sadly we shall see an hour
When neither wrong nor right are in their power!
Already they have lost their best defence,
The benefit of laws, which they dispense;
No justice to their righteous cause allowed,
But baffled by an arbitrary crowd;

* It must be admitted that the charges of blasphemy and atheism so often brought against Dryden were abundantly justified by the coarse irreverence of such lines as these.

And medals graved, their conquest to record,
The stamp and coin of their adopted lord.

The man who laughed but once, to see an ass
Mumbling to make the cross-grained thistles pass,*
Might laugh again to see a jury chaw
The prickles of unpalatable law.
The witnesses, that, leech like, lived on blood,
Sucking for them was medicinally good;
But when they fastened on their festered sore,
Then justice and religion they forswore;
Their maiden oaths debauched into a whore.
Thus men are raised by factions, and decried;
And rogue and saint distinguished by their side;
They rack even Scripture to confess their cause,
And plead a call to preach in spite of laws.
But that's no news to the poor injured page,
It has been used as ill in every age;
And is constrained with patience all to take,
For what defence can Greek and Hebrew make?
Happy who can this talking trumpet seize;
They make it speak whatever sense they please!
'Twas framed at first our oracle, to inquire;
But since our sects in prophecy grow higher,
The text inspires not them, but they the text inspire.

London, thou great emporium of our isle,
O thou too bounteous, thou too fruitful Nile!
How shall I praise or curse to thy desert?
Or separate thy sound from thy corrupted part?
I called thee Nile; the parallel will stand:
Thy tides of wealth o'erflow the fattened land;
Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
Engendered on the slime thou leavest behind.
Sedition has not wholly seized on thee,
Thy nobler parts are from infection free.

* The ass that made Crassus laugh, who never laughed before, by its painful attempt to eat thistles, was not exactly in the same condition as the juries, who chewed the prickles of arbitrary law very much against their own consent.

Of Israel's tribes thou hast a numerous band,
 But still the Canaanite is in the land.
 Thy military chiefs are brave and true,
 Nor are thy disenchanted burghers few.
 The head is loyal which thy heart commands,
 But what's a head with two such gouty hands?²
 The wise and wealthy love the surest way,
 And are content to thrive, and to obey.
 But wisdom is to sloth too great a slave;
 None are so busy as the fool and knave.
 Those let me curse; what vengeance will they urge,
 Whose ordures neither plague nor fire can purge?
 Nor sharp experience can to duty bring,
 Nor angry Heaven, nor a forgiving king!
 In gospel-phrases, their chapmen they betray;
 Their shops are dens, the buyer is their prey;
 The knack of trades is living on the spoil;
 They boast even when each other they beguile.
 Customs to steal is such a trivial thing,
 That 'tis their charter to defraud their king.
 All hands unite, of every jarring sect;
 They cheat the country first, and then infect.
 They for God's cause their monarchs dare dethrone,
 And they'll be sure to make his cause their own.
 Whether the plotting Jesuit laid the plan
 Of murdering kings, or the French Puritan,
 Our sacrilegious sects their guides outgo,
 And kings and kingly power would murder too.
 What means their traitorous combination?
 Too plain to evade, too shameful to confess?
 But treason is not owned when 'tis descried;
 Successful crimes alone are justified.

* The head was Sir John Moore, the mayor, and the 'two gouty hands,' Shute and Pilkington (against whom the Duke of York proceeded for damages) were the sheriffs. They were not the only gouty members of the Whig party. Shaftesbury was a martyr to gout. 'He died,' says Macintosh, 'clustering together all the agonies that wrought upon him in the end, of restless ambition, disappointment, and the gout.' The malady was strictly impartial, for Dryden himself sank under it.

The men, who no conspiracy would find,
 Who doubts, but, had it taken, they had joined,
 Joined in a mutual covenant of defence,
 At first without, at last against, their prince?
 If sovereign right by sovereign power they scan,
 The same bold maxim holds in God and man:
 God were not safe, his thunder could they shun,
 He should be forced to crown another son.
 Thus, when the heir was from the vineyard thrown,
 The rich possession was the murderer's own.
 In vain to sophistry they have recourse;
 By proving theirs no plot, they prove 'tis worse;
 Unmasked rebellion, and audacious force;
 Which though not actual, yet all eyes may see,
 'Tis working in the immediate power to be;
 For from pretended grievances they rise,
 First to dislike, and after to despise;
 Then, Cyclop-like, in human flesh to deal,
 Chop up a minister at every meal;
 Perhaps not wholly to melt down the king,
 But clip his regal rights within the ring;*
 From thence to assume the power of peace and war,
 And ease him, by degrees, of public care.
 Yet, to consult his dignity and fame,
 He should have leave to exercise the name,
 And hold the cards while commons played the game.

* The fraudulent practice of clipping came in with the re-introduction of milled coin, in the reign of Charles II. The last editor of Dryden is mistaken in saying that milled money was not struck in England till 1663. The mill was first employed by Queen Elizabeth in 1562, but after an experience of ten years, discontinued on account of the expense. It was again introduced in 1623, and finally established in 1662. It is often alluded to by the dramatists of the 16th century.—(See Narcs.) The clippers are frequently mentioned in the Comedies of the Restoration. The money thus reduced in value was passed off in great quantities at public places, particularly at the theatres, where, in the presence of the crowd, there was no time for examination. Dryden speaks of this imposition in the Epilogue to his son's play of *The Husband and his own Cuckold*.

* The truth on 't is, the payment of the pit
 Is like for like, clipt money for clipt wit.

For what can power give more than food and drink,
To live at ease, and not be bound to think?
These are the cooler methods of their crime,
But their hot zealots think 'tis loss of time;
On utmost bounds of loyalty they stand,
And grin and whet like a Croatian band,
That waits impatient for the last command.
Thus outlaws open villany maintain;
They steal not, but in squadrons scour the plain;
And if their power the passengers subdue,
The most have right, the wrong is in the few.
Such impious axioms foolishly they show,
For in some soils republics will not grow:
Our temperate isle will no extremes sustain,
Of popular sway, or arbitrary reign:
But slides, between them both, into the best,
Secure in freedom, in a monarch blest.
And, though the climate, vexed with various winds,
Works, through our yielding bodies, on our minds;
The wholesome tempest purges what it breeds,
To recommend the calmness that succeeds.

But thou, the pander of the people's hearts,
O crooked soul, and serpentine in arts,
Whose blandishments a loyal land have whored,
And broke the bond she plighted to her lord;
What curses on thy blasted name will fall,
Which age to age their legacy shall call!
For all must curse the woes that must descend on all.
Religion thou hast none: thy Mercury
Has passed through every sect, or theirs through thee.
But what thou givest, that venom still remains,
And the poxed nation feels thee in their brains.
What else inspires the tongues and swells the breasts
Of all thy bellowing renegado priests,
That preach up thee for God, dispense thy laws,
And with thy stum ferment their fainting cause?
Fresh fumes of madness raise; and toil, and sweat,
To make the formidable cripple great.

Yet should thy crimes succeed, should lawless power
Compass those ends thy greedy hopes devour,
Thy canting friends thy mortal foes would be,
Thy God and theirs would never long agree;
For thine (if thou hast any) must be one
That lets the world and human kind alone;
A jolly god, that passes hours too well,
To promise heaven, or threaten us with hell;
That, unconcerned, can at rebellion sit,
And wink at crimes he did himself commit.
A tyrant, theirs; the heaven their priesthood paints,
A conventicle of gloomy, sullen saints;
A heaven, like Bedlam, slovenly and sad,
Fore-doomed for souls with false religion mad.

Without a vision, poets can foreshow
What all, but fools, by common sense may know:
If true succession from our isle should fail,
And crowds profane, with impious arms, prevail,
Not thou, nor those thy factious arts engage,
Shall reap that harvest of rebellious rage,
With which thou flatterest thy decrepit age.
The swelling poison of the several sects,
Which, wanting vent, the nation's health infects,
Shall burst its bag, and, fighting out their way,
The various venoms on each other prey.
The presbyter, puffed up with spiritual pride,
Shall on the necks of the lewd nobles ride:
His brethren damn, the civil power defy,
And parcel out republic prelacy.
But short shall be his reign; his rigid yoke,
And tyrant power, will puny sects provoke;
And frogs, and toads, and all their tadpole train, [craue.
Will croak to Heaven for help, from this devouring
The cut-throat sword, and clamorous gown, shall jar,
In sharing their ill-gotten spoils of war;
Chiefs shall be grudged the part which they pretend;
Lords envy lords, and friends with every friend
About their impious merit shall contend.

The surly commons shall respect deny,
 And justle peerage out with property.
 Their general either shall his trust betray,
 And force the crowd to arbitrary sway;
 Or they, suspecting his ambitious aim,
 In hate of kings, shall cast anew the frame,
 And thrust out Collatine, that bore their name.

Thus inborn broils the factions would engage,
 Or wars of exiled heirs, or foreign rage,
 Till halting vengeance overtook our age;
 And our wild labours, wearied into rest,
 Reclined us on a rightful monarch's breast.

——— Pudet hæc opprobria, vobis
 Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

TO THE DUCHESS OF YORK,

ON HER RETURN FROM SCOTLAND IN THE YEAR 1682.

[THE Duchess of York addressed in these verses was Mary D'Este, the second wife of the duke. She was one of the most beautiful women of her time, and even Dryden's encomium did not exaggerate her charms. The occasion was the return of the duke from his temporary banishment in Scotland, also celebrated in the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, and in a prologue by Dryden spoken before their royal highnesses.]

WHEN factious rage to cruel exile drove
 The queen of beauty, and the court of love,
 The Muses drooped, with their forsaken arts,
 And the sad Cupids broke their useless darts;
 Our fruitful plains to wilds and deserts turned,
 Like Eden's face, when banished man it mourned.
 Love was no more, when loyalty was gone,
 The great supporter of his awful throne.

II. DRYDEN.

3

Love could no longer after beauty stay,
But wandered northward to the verge of day,
As if the sun and he had lost their way.
But now the illustrious nymph, returned again,
Brings every grace triumphant in her train.
The wondering Nereids, though they raised no storm,
Foreflowed her passage, to behold her form:
Some cried 'A Venus;' some, 'A Thetis' passed;
But this was not so fair, nor that so chaste.
Far from her sight flew Faction, Strife, and Pride;
And Envy did but look on her, and died.
Whate'er we suffered from our sullen fate,
Her sight is purchased at an easy rate.
Three gloomy years against this day were set;
But this one mighty sum has cleared the debt:
Like Joseph's dream, but with a better doom,
The famine past, the plenty still to come.
For her the weeping heavens become serene;
For her the ground is clad in cheerful green;
For her the nightingales are taught to sing,
And Nature has for her delayed the spring.
The Muse resumes her long-forgotten lays,
And Love, restored, his ancient realm surveys,
Recals our beauties, and revives our plays,
His waste dominions peoples once again,
And from her presence dates his second reign.
But awful charms on her fair forehead sit,
Dispensing what she never will admit:
Pleasing, yet cold, like Cynthia's silver beam,
The people's wonder, and the poet's theme.
Distempered Zeal, Sedition, cankered Hate,
No more shall vex the church, and tear the state:
No more shall Faction civil discords move,
Or only discords of too tender love;
Discord, like that of music's various parts;
Discord, that makes the harmony of hearts;
Discord, that only this dispute shall bring,
Who best should love the duke, and serve the king

MAC FLECKNOE.

['THE life of a wit,' says Pope, 'is a warfare upon earth.' The observation applies with special force to Dryden. No man was ever so relentlessly waylaid by adversaries political, polemical, and poetical. He lived in a swarm of hornets. Critics, pamphleteers, playwrights, poetasters, all fell upon him. He was the common mark for the ribaldry and hostility of the stews of literature. He was attacked for his religion, his politics, his plays, his poems, his critical theories; he was accused of atheism, of profligacy, of literary and political prostitution; he was abused, ridiculed, mimicked, and bludgeoned. In the course of his career, he encountered opponents from all quarters—Stillingfleet, Collier, Buckingham, Rochester, Blackmore, Milbourne, Settle. But he was not of a temperament to bear these assaults passively. Resolved to make one signal example, he singled out Shadwell from the herd of his enemies, and gibbeted him in *Mac Flecknoe*. There was no disguise about the real intention of this crushing satire. It was printed on a sheet and a half of paper, at the low price of two pence, and bore upon its title-page the declaration of war: *Mac Flecknoe; or, a Satire on the True-blue Protestant Poet, T. S. By the author of Absalom and Achitophel*. The whole impression, published in October, 1682, went off in a few days.

The immediate provocation which appears to have led Dryden to take this summary vengeance on Shadwell was a scurrilous answer he had written to the *Medal*, called *The Medal of John Bayes*. But there were old scores besides that to settle between them. Shadwell and Dryden had formerly been friends, and even after the publication of *Mac Flecknoe* they were upon speaking terms, if Shadwell's statement may be believed, that he taxed Dryden with the authorship, which Dryden denied with execrations. The story, however, is scarcely credible; for, although Dryden may have refused to avow his responsibility (a course since sanctioned

by still more remarkable examples*), the authorship of *Mac Flecknoe* was announced too plainly on the title-page to admit of a direct denial. Shadwell had offended Dryden in several ways, by crying him down as a hireling, and an atheist† and otherwise bringing his authority into contempt. But whatever his offences were, he paid a heavy penalty for them.

The best testimony to the great merits of *Mac Flecknoe* is the fact, that the satire has outlived the interest of the subject. Here was a quarrel between two authors, in which posterity has no concern; yet the salt of true wit has preserved it in lines that will always be read for the sake of their intrinsic excellence. This intellectual power of perpetuating ephemeral topics is not, however, without its drawbacks. It gives an undue advantage to the strong man over the weak, and transmits false estimates of its victims. There is no doubt that this is the case in reference to Shadwell; and justice demands that a word should be said on his behalf. He was not the blockhead 'confirmed in full stupidity' painted by Dryden. His plays, sealed up by their indecencies from the present generation, exhibit fertility of invention, and considerable capacity of observation. They are written, like everything he wrote, with headlong animal spirits, and a precipitancy that committed him to a thousand errors of judgment. His faults are common to his age—gross licentiousness, bad taste, and a foolish contempt of art; while his merits are special to himself. No writer of that day portrayed contemporary habits and manners with so much freedom and fidelity; and, notwithstanding the inexpressible coarseness of his humour, Shadwell's scenes bring us more closely acquainted with the actual life of the time than those of any other dramatist, with the single exception of Etherege. This is no

* Swift and Scott.

† 'He has often called me an atheist in print,' says Dryden, on one occasion; 'I would believe more charitably of him, and that he only goes the broad way, because the other is too narrow for him.' The reader has not forgotten the description of Og.

slight distinction; and even Dryden himself once held Shadwell's comedies in such esteem as to pronounce a panegyric upon them, in his Epilogue to the *Volunteers*. Compare these lines with the *Mac Flecknoe*, and judge how far satire is to be trusted for an honest exposition of character. Dryden here flatters Shadwell upon the most vulnerable point of his vanity — that assumption of a resemblance to Ben Jonson, which, of all things in the world! he prided himself upon most — just as grossly as he denounces him for it in *Mac Flecknoe*.

Shadwell, the great support of the comic stage,
Born to expose the follies of the age;
To whip prevailing vices, and unite
Mirth with Instruction, Profit with Delight
For large ideas and a flowing pen,
First of our times, and second but to Ben.

The best critical character of Shadwell is in the well-known lines of Rochester:

Of all the modern wits, none seem to me
Once to have touched upon true comedy,
But hasty Shadwell, and slow Wycherley.
Shadwell's unfinished works do yet impart
Great proofs of force of genius, none o' art;
With just bold strokes he dashes here and there,
Showing great mastery with little care.

Rochester forgot Etherege, who was earlier than either, and in some respects better.

Mac Flecknoe (or rather, *Flecknoe*, the *Mac* being added by Dryden, with reference to Shadwell, to signify the son of Flecknoe) was an Irish Roman-catholic priest, doggrel sonneteer, and playwright, who, although selected as the stalking horse of the satire, once wrote in praise of Dryden.* Shadwell appears to have resented as the worst affront of all,

* Flecknoe's panegyric on Dryden was published with his name; but there is reason, nevertheless, to suspect that he was one of the laureate's masked assailants. Mr. P. Cunningham (*Gen. Mag.* 1850) gives some extracts from a pamphlet of the date of 1668, addressed to the Hon. E. Howard, and signed R. F., in which Dryden is scurrilously attacked for his defence of rhyme. Mr. Cunningham conjectures, from the identity of the initials, that the pamphlet was written by Flecknoe, and infers that it may have been the cause of Dryden's animosity against him. Flecknoe is supposed to have died about 1678.

the being represented as an Irishman, and took care to acquaint the public that he had never seen Ireland till he was three-and-twenty years old, and was there only four months; as if any one took the palpable ridicule of the satirist as matter of fact.

Leigh Hunt detects an odd blunder in *Mac Flecknoe*. 'It is a curious oversight of Dryden's in this satire,' he observes, 'that he should put the best of the wit into the mouth of Flecknoe himself.']

ALL human things are subject to decay,
 And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
 This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
 Was called to empire, and had governed long;
 In prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
 Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
 This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
 And blessed with issue of a large increase;
 Worn out with business, did at length debate
 To settle the succession of the state;
 And, pondering which of all his sons was fit
 To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
 Cried,—'Tis resolved! for nature pleads, that he
 Should only rule, who most resembles me.
 Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
 Mature in dulness from his tender years;
 Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he
 Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
 The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
 But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
 Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
 Strike through and make a lucid interval;
 But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
 His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
 Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
 And seems designed for thoughtless majesty;
 Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain.
 And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.

Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,*
 Thou last great prophet of tautology.
 Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
 Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
 And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
 To teach the nations in thy greater name.
 My warbling lute—the lute I whilom strung,
 When to King John of Portugal I sung—
 Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
 When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
 With well-timed oars before the royal barge,
 Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
 And, big with hymn, commander of an host,—
 The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tossed.
 Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
 The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
 At thy well-sharpened thumb from shore to shore,
 The trebles squeak for fear, the basses roar;
 Echoes from Pissing-Alley, Shadwell call,
 And Shadwell they resound from Aston-hall.
 About thy boat the little fishes throng,
 As at the morning toast that floats along.
 Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
 Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand.
 St. André's feet ne'er kept more equal time,†
 Not even the feet of thy own *Psyche's* rhyme:‡

* Subsequent criticism has vindicated Shirley, the last of the race of giants, from this unjust censure, however posterity may have left the voluminous Heywood to his fate. But Dryden's condemnation consigned him for a long time to oblivion. A complete edition of Shirley's plays, annotated by Mr. Gifford, with a biography by the Rev. Alexander Dyce, was published in 1833.

† St. André was a celebrated French dancing-master.

‡ Shadwell's opera of *Psyche* was produced at Dorset Gardens in 1674. Singleton, alluded to a few lines lower down, was a musician. He is mentioned by Pepys as far back as 1660, when one night after supper the king 'did put a great affront upon his music, bidding them stop, and make the French music play.' The reference to his 'lute and sword' seems to confirm the supposition of the editor of the *Diary*, that Singleton was leader of the private band.

Though they in number as in sense excel;
 So just, so like tautology, they fell,
 That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
 The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
 And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius more.

Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy,
 In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
 All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
 That for anointed dulness he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta bind,
 (The fair Augusta much to fears inclined,)
 An ancient fabric raised to inform the sight,
 There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight;
 A watch-tower once, but now, so fate ordains,
 Of all the pile an empty name remains;
 From its old ruins brothel-houses rise,
 Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,
 Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
 And, undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.*
 Near these a Nursery erects its head,†
 Where queens are formed, and future heroes bred;
 Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry;
 Where infant punks their tender voices try,
 And little Maximins the gods defy.

- * 'Where their vast court the swollen waters keep,
 And, undisturbed by moons, in silence sleep.'

COWLEY'S *Davidels*.

† The Nursery, which we here learn stood in Barbican, was a theatre erected by letters patent from the king, under the control of Mr. William Legge, one of the grooms of the bedchamber (ancestor of the Earl of Dartmouth), for the purpose of training boys and girls in the art of acting, to be afterwards drafted into the companies of Killigrew and D'Avenant. It appears from Dryden's allusion to Simkin, the character of a cobbler in an interlude, and Panton, said to have been a famous punster, and the express exclusion of 'great Fletcher,' and 'great Jonson,' that the class of pieces acted at the Nursery were of a trivial and inferior order. In the patent granted to Legge, authorizing him to erect this training theatre (for a knowledge of which we are indebted to Mr. Thomas Edlyne Tomlins, who printed a copy of it in the *Shakspeare Society Papers*, iii. 162), it is expressly provided, that no 'obscene, scandaious, or offensive passages be brought upon the stage; but such only shall there be had and used as may consist with harmless

Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
 Nor greater Jonson dares in socks appear;
 But gentle Simkin just reception finds
 Amidst this monument of vanished minds;
 Pure clinches the suburban muse affords,
 And Panton waging harmless war with words.
 Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
 Ambitiously designed his Shadwell's throne.
 For ancient Decker prophesied long since,
 That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
 Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense;
 To whom true dulness should some Psyches owe,
 But worlds of Misers from his pen should flow;
 Humorists and Hypocrites it should produce,
 Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.*

Now empress Fame had published the renown
 Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
 Roused by report of fame, the nations meet,
 From near Bunhill, and distant Watling-street.
 No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
 But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay;
 From dusty shops neglected authors come,
 Martyrs of pies, and reliques of the bum.
 Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,†
 But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way.

and inoffensive delights and recreations; a condition which, in some degree, helps to explain the account given of the performances by Dryden. The Nursery is alluded to by other writers; but I am not aware that there exists anywhere an account of the actors and actresses who were brought up in the establishment. Mr. Tomlins observes, that 'there can be no doubt that some of our earliest actresses, after the Restoration, were educated there.' But this is a mistake; as women certainly appeared on the stage in the year after the Restoration; and the patent to Legge is dated in the fourteenth year of the reign of Charles II. The earliest mention of the Nursery is in the *Rehearsal*, which was brought out in 1671, at which time the patent had not been made out, although it would appear the establishment was already in existence.

* The *Miser*, and the *Humorists*, were comedies of Shadwell's. Raymond is a character in the latter; Bruce, in the *Virtuoso*.

† Ogleby is best known as the translator of the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Æneid*. He was originally a dancing-master. Herringman, whose

Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
 And Herringman was captain of the guard.
 The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
 High on a throne of his own labours reared.
 At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
 Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
 His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
 And lambent dulness played around his face.
 As Hannibal did to the altars come,
 Swore by his sire, a mortal foe to Rome;
 So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be vain,
 That he till death true dulness would maintain;
 And, in his father's right, and realm's defence,
 Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
 The king himself the sacred unction made,
 As king by office, and as priest by trade.
 In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
 He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
 Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,*
 At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway;
 Whose righteous lore the prince had practised young,
 And from whose loins recorded Psyche sprung.
 His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
 That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.
 Just at the point of time, if fame not lie,
 On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.
 So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tyber's brook,
 Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
 The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
 And omens of his future empire take.

name occurs a few lines lower down, was the publisher at whose house in the New Exchange, Dryden is supposed to have lodged at the beginning of his literary career.

* 'As much as if he had said,' observes a correspondent, in the *Censura Literaria*, 'serviet Tibi ultima Thule.' *Love's Kingdom* was a pastoral tragi-comedy, by Flecknoe. The characters, prologue, and the author's advertisement, will be found in the *Censura Literaria*, vol. iii. p. 37. It was brought out at Lincoln's-Inn Fields, in 1664, and lived three nights.

The sire then shook the honours of his head,
 And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
 Full on the filial dulness: long he stood,
 Repelling from his breast the raging God;
 At length burst out in this prophetic mood:

‘Heavens bless my son! from Ireland let him reign
 To far Barbadoes on the western main;
 Of his dominion may no end be known,
 And greater than his father’s be his throne;
 Beyond Love’s Kingdom let him stretch his pen!’—
 He paused, and all the people cried, Amen.
 Then thus continued he: ‘My son, advance
 Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
 Success let others teach, learn thou from me
 Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
 Let Virtuosos in five years be writ,
 Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
 Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
 Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
 Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,*
 And in their folly show the writer’s wit.
 Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
 And justify their author’s want of sense.
 Let them be all by thy own model made
 Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid;—
 That they to future ages may be known,
 Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
 Nay, let thy men of wit, too, be the same,
 All full of thee, and differing but in name.
 But let no alien Sedley interpose,
 To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.†

* Characters in Etherege’s comedies.

† Alluding to Shadwell’s comedy of *Epsom Wells*. Shadwell was very indignant at having been accused of receiving assistance from Sedley in the composition of his plays. The accusation itself is improbable. Sedley’s style, artificial and premeditated, is in the opposite extreme to the rampant dialogue of Shadwell. He may have suggested corrections, as Shadwell acknowledges him to have done in one

And when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
 Trust nature, do not labour to be dull;
 But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
 Sir Formal's* oratory will be thine;
 Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,
 And does thy northern dedications fill.
 Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
 By arrogating Jonson's hostile name;†
 Let Father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
 And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
 Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
 What share have we in nature, or in art?
 Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
 And rail at arts he did not understand?
 Where made he love in prince Nicander's vein,‡
 Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain?
 Where sold he bargains, 'whip-stitch, kiss my arse,'
 Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce?
 When did his muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
 As thou whole Etherege dost transfuse to thine?
 But so transfused, as oil and waters flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humours to invent for each new play:
 This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
 By which one way to dulness 'tis inclined;
 Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretence
 Of likeness; thine's a tympany of sense.
 A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin of wit.

* Instance; but his poised and formal wit can nowhere be detected in these uproarious comedies.

• A character in the *Virtuoso*.

† Shadwell's notorious foible, already alluded to.

‡ A character in *Psyche*.

Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
 Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic, sleep.
 With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite;
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
 Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen Iambics, but mild Anagram.
 Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command,
 Some peaceful province in Acrostic land.
 There thou mayst Wings display and Altars raise,
 And torture one poor word ten thousand ways;
 Or, if thou wouldst thy different talents suit,
 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute.*

He said; but his last words were scarcely heard;
 For Bruce and Longville† had a trap prepared,
 And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
 Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
 Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
 The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
 With double portion of his father's art.

* The allusions to Flecknoe's lute—the lute with which he is said to have entertained the King of Portugal—indicate an accomplishment of which he seems to have made as ridiculous a display as of his faculty for rhyming. Marvel, in his well-known character of Flecknoe, describes him living at the sign of the Pelican, in Rome, up three stair-cases, signifying his triple pretensions as 'priest, poet, and musician.' There is a touch of humour lurking under the paternity Dryden ascribes to Shadwell that has escaped notice. Flecknoe was as meagre as Shadwell was bulky. Here is Marvel's picture of him:—

'So thin
 He stands, as if he only fed had been
 With consecrated wafers; and the Host
 Hath sure more flesh than he can boast.
 This Basso Relievo of a man,
 Who, as a camel tall, as easily can
 The needle's eye thread without any stitch,' &c.

Shadwell's personal vanity was, no doubt, sorely wounded by being turned into ridicule as the son of so ghostly a father.

† Characters in the *Virtuoso*.

RELIGIO LAICI: OR, A LAYMAN'S FAITH.

AN EPISTLE.

[THIS was the least popular of Dryden's poems. It appeared in November, 1682. Malone says that it was not reprinted in Dryden's life-time, but Scott speaks of a second edition published in 1683, a copy of which he saw in Mr. Heber's library. It is certain, however, that the poem was coldly received, and, considering the very different tenets afterwards espoused by the writer, it may be presumed that he was not very anxious to revive it. The *Religio Laici* was addressed to a young friend on his translation of Simon's *Critical History of the Old Testament*, and is designedly written after the manner of Horace, in what Dryden calls the 'epistolary' style. The expression is everywhere admirably suited to the subject—clear, easy, and dispassionate. In no instance has this great master of the art of reasoning in verse more felicitously employed his powers. The creed vindicated in the poem is that of an humble Christian, who rests upon the Scriptures as the sole rule of faith. Strange contrast to that more elaborate and ornate work in which he subsequently announced and defended his adoption of the Church of Rome! In the commentaries that have been made on this poem, it appears not to have been observed that Dryden avows himself in the Preface, as in the poem itself, a member of the Church of England. Whatever doubts may at this time have found admission to his mind, that avowal is perfectly clear.]

THE PREFACE.

A POEM with so bold a title, and a name prefixed from which the handling of so serious a subject would not be expected, may reasonably oblige the author to say somewhat in defence, both of himself and of his undertaking. In the first place, if it be objected to me that, being a layman, I ought not to have concerned

myself with speculations which belong to the profession of divinity; I could answer, that perhaps laymen, with equal advantages of parts and knowledge, are not the most incompetent judges of sacred things; but in the due sense of my own weakness and want of learning I plead not this; I pretend not to make myself a judge of faith in others, but only to make a confession of my own. I lay no unhallowed hand upon the ark, but wait on it with the reverence that becomes me at a distance. In the next place I will ingenuously confess, that the helps I have used in this small treatise were many of them taken from the works of our own reverend divines of the Church of England; so that the weapons with which I combat irreligion are already consecrated; though I suppose they may be taken down as lawfully as the sword of Goliath was by David, when they are to be employed for the common cause against the enemies of piety. I intend not by this to entitle them to any of my errors, which yet I hope are only those of charity to mankind; and such as my own charity has caused me to commit, that of others may more easily excuse. Being naturally inclined to scepticism in philosophy, I have no reason to impose my opinions in a subject which is above it; but, whatever they are, I submit them with all reverence to my mother Church, accounting them no further mine, than as they are authorized, or at least uncondemned by her. And, indeed, to secure myself on this side, I have used the necessary precaution of showing this paper, before it was published, to a judicious and learned friend, a man indefatigably zealous in the service of the Church and State; and whose writings have highly deserved of both. He was pleased to approve the body of the discourse, and I hope he is more my friend than to do it out of complaisance; it is true he had too good a taste to like it all; and amongst some other faults, recommended to my second view, what I have written perhaps too boldly on St. Athanasius, which he advised me wholly to omit. I am sensible enough that I had done more prudently to have followed his opinion; but then I could not have satisfied myself that I had done honestly not to have written what was my own. It has always been my thought, that heathens who never did, nor without miracle could, hear of the name of Christ, were yet in a possibility of salvation. Neither will it enter easily into my belief, that before the coming of our Saviour the whole world, excepting only the Jewish nation, should lie under the inevitable necessity of everlasting punishment, for want of that revelation, which was confined to so small a spot of ground as that of Palestine. Among the sons of Noah we read of one only who was accursed; and if a blessing

in the ripeness of time was reserved for Japhet (of whose progeny we are), it seems unaccountable to me, why so many generations of the same offspring, as preceded our Saviour in the flesh, should be all involved in one common condemnation, and yet that their posterity should be intitled to the hopes of salvation : as if a bill of exclusion had passed only on the fathers, which debarred not the sons from their succession. Or that so many ages had been delivered over to hell, and so many reserved for heaven, and that the devil had the first choice, and God the next. Truly I am apt to think that the revealed religion which was taught by Noah to all his sons, might continue for some ages in the whole posterity. That afterwards it was included wholly in the family of Shem is manifest ; but when the progenies of Cham and Japhet swarmed into colonies, and those colonies were subdivided into many others : in process of time their descendants lost by little and little the primitive and purer rites of divine worship, retaining only the notion of one deity ; to which succeeding generations added others ; for men took their degrees in those ages from conquerors to gods. Revelation being thus eclipsed to almost all mankind, the light of nature, as the next in dignity, was substituted ; and that is it which St. Paul concludes to be the rule of the heathens, and by which they are hereafter to be judged. If my supposition be true, then the consequence which I have assumed in my poem may be also true ; namely, that Deism, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed religion in the posterity of Noah : and that our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophizing divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained that by their force mankind has been able to find out that there is one supreme agent or intellectual Being which we call God ; that praise and prayer are his due worship ; and the rest of those deducements, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God, by the weak pinions of our reason, but he has been pleased to descend to us ; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of motion, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is by its own virtue. And, indeed, it is very improbable that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any

Being, not so much as of our own, should be able to find out by them, that supreme nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They who would prove religion by reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support: it is to take away the pillars from our faith, and to prop it only with a twig; it is to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible, as it is not, to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the workmen. For every man is building a several way; impotently conceited of his own model and his own materials: reason is always striving, and always at a loss; and of necessity it must so come to pass, while it is exercised about that which is not its proper object. Let us be content at last to know God by his own methods; at least, so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the sacred Scriptures: to apprehend them to be the word of God is all our reason has to do; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of Heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

And now for what concerns the holy bishop Athanasius, the preface of whose creed seems inconsistent with my opinion; which is, that heathens may possibly be saved: in the first place, I desire it may be considered that it is the preface only, not the creed itself, which, till I am better informed, is of too hard a digestion for my charity. It is not that I am ignorant how many several texts of scripture seemingly support that cause; but neither am I ignorant how all those texts may receive a kinder and more mollified interpretation. Every man who is read in church history knows that belief was drawn up after a long contestation with Arius, concerning the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and his being one substance with the Father; and that thus compiled it was sent abroad among the Christian churches, as a kind of test, which whosoever took was looked on as an orthodox believer. It is manifest from hence, that the heathen part of the empire was not concerned in it; for its business was not to distinguish betwixt Pagans and Christians, but betwixt Heretics and true Believers. This, well considered, takes off the heavy weight of censure, which I would willingly avoid from so venerable a man; for if this proportion, 'whosoever will be saved,' be restrained only to those to whom it was intended, and for whom it was composed, I mean the Christians; then the anathema reaches not the heathens, who had never heard of Christ, and were nothing interested in that dispute. After all, I am far from blaming even that prefatory

addition to the creed, and as far from cavilling at the continuation of it in the liturgy of the church, where on the days appointed it is publicly read: for I suppose there is the same reason for it now, in opposition to the Socinians, as there was then against the Arians; the one being a Heresy, which seems to have been refined out of the other; and with how much more plausibility of reason it combats our religion, with so much more caution it ought to be avoided: therefore the prudence of our church is to be commended, which has interposed her authority for the recommendation of this creed. Yet to such as are grounded in the true belief, those explanatory creeds, the Nicene and this of Athanasius, might perhaps be spared; for what is supernatural will always be a mystery in spite of exposition, and for my own part, the plain apostles' creed is most suitable to my weak understanding, as the simplest diet is the most easy of digestion.

I have dwelt longer on this subject than I intended, and longer than perhaps I ought; for having laid down, as my foundation, that the Scripture is a rule; that in all things needful to salvation it is clear, sufficient, and ordained by God Almighty for that purpose, I have left myself no right to interpret obscure places, such as concern the possibility of eternal happiness to heathens: because whatsoever is obscure is concluded not necessary to be known.

But, by asserting the Scripture to be the canon of our faith, I have unavoidably created to myself two sorts of enemies: the Papists, indeed, more directly, because they have kept the scripture from us what they could, and have reserved to themselves a right of interpreting what they have delivered under the pretence of infallibility: and the Fanatics more collaterally, because they have assumed what amounts to an infallibility, in the private spirit; and have detorted those texts of scripture which are not necessary to salvation, to the damnable uses of sedition, disturbance, and destruction of the civil government. To begin with the Papists, and to speak freely, I think them the less dangerous, at least in appearance, to our present state, for not only the penal laws are in force against them, and their number is contemptible; but also their peers and commons are excluded from parliament, and consequently those laws in no probability of being repealed. A general and uninterrupted plot of their Clergy, ever since the Reformation, I suppose all Protestants believe; for it is not reasonable to think but that so many of their orders, as were ousted from their fat possessions, would endeavour a re-entrance against those whom they account heretics. As for the late design, Mr. Coleman's letters, for aught I know, are the best evidence;

and what they discover, without wire-drawing their sense, or malicious glosses, all men of reason conclude credible. If there be anything more than this required of me, I must believe it as well as I am able, in spite of the witnesses, and out of a decent conformity to the votes of parliament; for I suppose the Fanatics will not allow the private spirit in this case. Here the infallibility is at least in one part of the government; and our understandings as well as our wills are represented. But to return to the Roman catholics, how can we be secure from the practice of Jesuited Papists in that religion? For not two or three of that order, as some of them would impose upon us, but almost the whole body of them are of opinion, that their infallible master has a right over kings, not only in spirituals but temporals. Not to name Mariana, Bellarmine, Emanuel Sa, Molina, Santarel, Simancha,* and at least twenty others of foreign countries; we can produce of our own nation, Campian, and Doleman or Parsons, besides many are named whom I have not read, who all of them attest this doctrine, that the pope can depose and give away the right of any sovereign prince, *si vel paulum deflexerit*, if he shall never so little warp: but if he once comes to be excommunicated, then the bond of obedience is taken off from subjects; and they may and ought to drive him like another Nebuchadnezzar, *ex hominum Christianorum dominatu*, from exercising dominion over Christians; and to this they are bound by virtue of divine precept, and by all the ties of conscience, under no less penalty than damnation. If they answer me, as a learned priest has lately written, that this doctrine of the Jesuits is not *de fide*; and that, consequently, they are not obliged by it, they must pardon me, if I think they have said nothing to the purpose; for it is a maxim in their church, where points of faith are not decided, and that doctors are of contrary opinions, they may follow which part they please; but more safely the most received and most authorized. And their champion Bellarmine has told the world, in his apology, that the King of England is a vassal to the pope, *ratione directi Domini*, and that he holds in villanage of his Roman landlord. Which is no new claim put in for England. Our chronicles are his authentic witnesses, that King John was deposed by the same plea, and Philip Augustus admitted tenant. And which makes the more for Bellarmine, the French king was again ejected when our king submitted to the church, and the crown was received under the sordid condition of a vassalage.

* Jesuits and controversial writers in the Roman-catholic church.

It is not sufficient for the more moderate and well-meaning Papists, of which I doubt not there are many, to produce the evidences of their loyalty to the late king, and to declare their innocency in this plot: I will grant their behaviour in the first to have been as loyal and as brave as they desire, and will be willing to hold them excused as to the second, I mean when it comes to my turn, and after my betters; for it is a madness to be sober alone, while the nation continues drunk: but that saying of their father Cres. is still running in my head, that they may be dispensed with in their obedience to an heretic prince, while the necessity of the times shall oblige them to it; for that, as another of them tells us, is only the effect of Christian prudence; but when once they shall get power to shake him off, an heretic is no lawful king, and consequently to rise against him is no rebellion. I should be glad, therefore, that they would follow the advice which was charitably given them by a reverend prelate of our Church,—namely, that they would join in a public act of disowning and detesting those Jesuitic principles, and subscribe to all doctrines which deny the Pope's authority of deposing kings, and releasing subjects from their oath of allegiance; to which I should think they might easily be induced, if it be true that this present Pope has condemned the doctrine of king-killing, a thesis of the Jesuits, maintained, amongst others, *ex cathedra*, as they call it, or in open consistory.

Leaving them, therefore, in so fair a way, if they please themselves, of satisfying all reasonable men of their sincerity and good meaning to the government, I shall make bold to consider that other extreme of our religion, I mean the Fanatics, or Schismatics, of the English Church. Since the Bible has been translated into our tongue, they have used it so as if their business was not to be saved, but to be damned by its contents. If we consider only them, better had it been for the English nation that it had still remained in the original Greek and Hebrew, or at least in the honest Latin of St. Jerome, than that several texts in it should have been prevaricated to the destruction of that government, which put it into so ungrateful hands.

How many heresies the first translation* of Tindal* produced in

* William Tindal, a zealous Lutheran, finished a translation of the New Testament in 1527, and afterwards one of the five books of Moses, with prefatory expositions. They were published in England, but suppressed, and the sale and reading of them prohibited, anno 1546, by an act of parliament, as being erroneous, and contributing to turn people's heads.

few years, let my Lord Herbert's *History of Henry the Eighth* inform you; insomuch, that for the gross errors in it, and the great mischiefs it occasioned, a sentence passed on the first edition of the Bible, too shameful almost to be repeated. After the short reign of Edward the Sixth, who had continued to carry on the Reformation on other principles than it was begun, every one knows that not only the chief promoters of that work, but many others, whose consciences would not dispense with Popery, were forced, for fear of persecution, to change climates; from whence returning at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, many of them who had been in France, and at Geneva, brought back the rigid opinions and imperious discipline of Calvin, to graft upon our Reformation; which, though they cunningly concealed at first, as well knowing how nauseously that drug would go down in a lawful Monarchy, which was prescribed for a rebellious Commonwealth, yet they always kept it in reserve, and were never wanting to themselves, either in court or parliament, when either they had any prospect of a numerous party of fanatic members of the one, or the encouragement of any favourite in the other, whose covetousness was gaping at the patrimony of the Church. They who will consult the works of our venerable Hooker, or the account of his life, or more particularly the letter written to him on this subject by George Cranmer, may see by what gradations they proceeded; from the dislike of cap and surplice, the very next step was admonitions to the parliament against the whole government ecclesiastical; then came out volumes in English and Latin in defence of their tenets; and immediately practices were set on foot to erect their discipline without authority. Those not succeeding, satire and railing was the next; and Martin Mar-prelate, the Marvel of those times, was the first presbyterian scribbler who sanctified libels and scurrility to the use of the good old cause. Which was done, says my author, upon this account: that their serious treatises having been fully answered and refuted, they might compass by railing what they had lost by reasoning; and, when their cause was sunk in court and parliament, they might at least hedge in a stake amongst the rabble; for to their ignorance all things are wit which are abusive; but if Church and State were made the theme, then the doctoral degree of wit was to be taken at Billingsgate; even the most saint-like of the party, though they durst not excuse this contempt and vilifying of the government, yet were pleased, and grinned at it with a pious smile, and called it a judgment of God against the hierarchy. Thus sectaries, we may see, were born with teeth, foul-mouthed

and scurrilous from their infancy; and if spiritual pride, venom, violence, contempt of superiors, and slander, had been the marks of orthodox belief; the presbytery and the rest of our schismatics, which are their spawn, were always the most visible church in the Christian world.

It is true, the government was too strong at that time for a rebellion; but to show what proficiency they had made in Calvin's school, even then their mouths watered at it; for two of their gifted brotherhood, Hacket* and Coppinger, as the story tells us, got up into a pease-cart and harangued the people, to dispose them to an insurrection, and to establish their discipline by force; so that, however it comes about, that now they celebrate Queen Elizabeth's birthnight, as that of their saint and patroness; yet then they were for doing the work of the Lord by arms against her; and in all probability they wanted but a fanatic lord-mayor and two sheriffs of their party, to have compassed it.

Our venerable Hooker, after many admonitions which he had given them, towards the end of his preface breaks out into this prophetic speech:—'There is in every one of these considerations most just cause to fear, lest our hastiness to embrace a thing of so perilous consequence,' [meaning the presbyterian discipline,] 'should cause posterity to feel those evils which as yet are more easy for us to prevent than they would be for them to remedy.'

How fatally this Cassandra has foretold, we know too well, by sad experience: the seeds were sown in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the bloody harvest ripened in the reign of King Charles the Martyr; and, because all the sheaves could not be carried off without shedding some of the loose grains, another crop is too likely to follow; nay, I fear it is unavoidable, if the Conventiclers be permitted still to scatter.

A man may be suffered to quote an adversary to our religion, when he speaks truth. And it is the observation of Maimbourg, in his *History of Calvinism*, that wherever that discipline was

* Hacket was a man of learning; he had much of the scripture by heart, and made himself remarkable by preaching in an enthusiastic strain. In 1591, he made a great parade of sanctity, pretended to divine inspiration and visions from God. He was highly extolled by some Calvinist ministers, particularly by Coppinger and Arthington, who, in Cheapside, proclaimed him a greater prophet than Moses, or St. John the Baptist,—nay, that he was Christ himself come to judge the world, and that they were his assisting prophets, one styling himself the prophet of mercy, the other of judgment. Hacket was tried, convicted, and hanged; persisting with his last breath in the most horrid blasphemies. And Coppinger starved himself to death in prison.

planted and embraced, rebellion, civil war, and misery attended it. And how, indeed, should it happen otherwise? Reformation of Church and State has always been the ground of our divisions in England. While we were Papists, our holy father rid us, by pretending authority out of the Scriptures, to depose princes; when we shook off his authority, the sectaries furnished themselves with the same weapons; and out of the same magazine, the Bible: so that the Scriptures, which are in themselves the greatest security of governors, as commanding express obedience to them, are now turned to their destruction; and never, since the Reformation, has there wanted a text of their interpreting, to authorize a rebel. And it is to be noted, by the way, that the doctrines of king-killing and deposing, which have been taken up only by the worst party of the Papists, the most frontless flatterers of the Pope's authority, have been espoused, defended, and are still maintained, by the whole body of Nonconformists and Republicans. It is but dubbing themselves the people of God, which it is the interest of their preachers to tell them they are, and their own interest to believe; and, after that, they cannot dip into the Bible, but one text or another will turn up for their purpose: if they are under persecution, as they call it, then that is a mark of their election; if they flourish, then God works miracles for their deliverance, and the saints are to possess the earth.

They may think themselves to be too roughly handled in this paper; but I, who know best how far I could have gone on this subject, must be bold to tell them they are spared: though at the same time I am not ignorant that they interpret the mildness of a writer to them, as they do the mercy of the government; in the one, they think it fear, and conclude it weakness in the other. The best way for them to confute me, is, as I before advised the Papists, to disclaim their principles and renounce their practices. We shall all be glad to think them true Englishmen, when they obey the King; and true Protestants, when they conform to the Church discipline.

It remains that I acquaint the reader, that these verses were written for an ingenious young gentleman, my friend,* upon his translation of *The Critical History of the Old Testament*, composed by the learned Father Simon: the verses, therefore, are

* Derrick says that Dryden's 'young friend' was the son of the celebrated John Hampden, who was afterwards in the Rye-house plot, and fined 15,000*l.*, which was remitted at the Revolution. But this seems to be an error, the initials of Dryden's friend being given as H. D.

addressed to the translator of that work, and the style of them is, what it ought to be, epistolary.

If any one be so lamentable a critic, as to require the smoothness, the numbers, and the turn of heroic poetry in this poem, I must tell him, that, if he has not read Horace, I have studied him, and hope the style of his epistles is not ill imitated here. The expressions of a poem designed purely for instruction, ought to be plain, and natural, and yet majestic: for here the poet is presumed to be a kind of lawgiver, and those three qualities which I have named are proper to the legislative style. The florid, elevated, and figurative way, is for the passions,—for love and hatred, fear and anger, are begotten in the soul, by showing their objects out of their true proportion, either greater than the life, or less; but instruction is to be given by showing them what they naturally are. A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth.

RELIGIO LAICI.

AN EPISTLE.

Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta docere.

DIM as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
 To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
 Is reason to the soul: and as, on high,
 Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
 Not light us here; so reason's glimmering ray
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
 But guide us upward to a better day.
 And as those nightly tapers disappear
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
 So pale grows reason at religion's sight;
 So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.
 Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led
 From cause to cause, to nature's secret head,
 And found that one first principle must be;
 But what, or who, that UNIVERSAL HE;
 Whether some soul encompassing this ball,
 Unmade, unmoved—yet making, moving all;

Or various atoms' interfering dance,
Leaped into form, the noble work of chance;
Or this GREAT ALL was from eternity,—
Not even the Stagirite himself could see,
And Epicurus guessed as well as he.
As blindly groped they for a future state,
As rashly judged of providence and fate.
But least of all could their endeavours find
What most concerned the good of human kind;
For happiness was never to be found,
But vanished from them like enchanted ground.
One thought Content the good to be enjoyed:
This every little accident destroyed;
The wiser madmen did for Virtue toil:
A thorny, or at best, a barren soil;
In Pleasure some their glutton souls would steep:
But found their line too short, the well too deep,
And leaky vessels which no bliss could keep.
Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll,
Without a centre where to fix the soul:
In this wild maze their vain endeavours end:—
How can the less the greater comprehend?
Or finite reason reach Infinity?
For what could fathom God were more than He.
The Deist thinks he stands on firmer ground;
Cries *εὐρεκα*, the mighty secret's found:
God is that spring of good; supreme and best;
We made to serve, and in that service blest;
If so, some rules of worship must be given,
Distributed alike to all by Heaven;
Else God were partial, and to some denied
The means his justice should for all provide.
This general worship is to praise and pray;
One part to borrow blessings, one to pay;
And when frail nature slides into offence,
The sacrifice for crimes is penitence.
Yet since the effects of providence, we find,
Are variously dispensed to human kind;

That vice triumphs, and virtue suffers here,
 A brand that sovereign justice cannot bear:
 Our reason prompts us to a future state,
 The last appeal from fortune and from fate,
 Where God's all-righteous ways will be declared;
 The bad meet punishment, the good reward.

Thus man by his own strength to heaven would soar,
 And would not be obliged to God for more.
 Vain, wretched creature, how art thou misled
 To think thy wit these god-like notions bred!
 These truths are not the product of thy mind,
 But dropt from heaven, and of a nobler kind.
 Revealed Religion first informed thy sight,
 And Reason saw not till Faith sprung the light.
 Hence all thy natural worship takes the source:
 'Tis revelation what thou think'st discourse.
 Else how comest thou to see these truths so clear,
 Which so obscure to heathens did appear?
 Not Plato these, nor Aristotle found,
 Nor he whose wisdom oracles renowned.*
 Hast thou a wit so deep, or so sublime,
 Or canst thou lower dive, or higher climb?
 Canst thou by reason more of Godhead know
 Than Plutarch, Seneca, or Cicero?
 Those giant wits, in happier ages born,
 When arms and arts did Greece and Rome adorn,†
 Knew no such system; no such piles could raise
 Of natural worship, built on prayer and praise
 To one sole God.
 Nor did remorse to expiate sin prescribe,
 But slew their fellow creatures for a bribe:
 The guiltless victim groaned for their offence,
 And cruelty and blood was penitence.

* Socrates. Orig. Ed.

† This couplet recalls Dryden's own lines—

'Three poets, in three distant ages born,
 Greece, Italy, and England did adorn,' &c.

On Milton's Picture.

If sheep and oxen could atone for men,
Ah! at how cheap a rate the rich might sin!
And great oppressors might Heaven's wrath beguile,
By offering his own creatures for a spoil!

Darest thou, poor worm, offend Infinity?
And must the terms of peace be given by thee?
Then thou art Justice in the last appeal;
Thy easy God instructs thee to rebel;
And, like a king remote and weak, must take
What satisfaction thou art pleased to make.

But if there be a power too just and strong,
To wink at crimes, and bear unpunished wrong
Look humbly upward, see his will disclose
The forfeit first, and then the fine impose:
A mulct thy poverty could never pay,
Had not eternal wisdom found the way,
And with celestial wealth supplied thy store;
His justice makes the fine, his mercy quits the score.
See God descending in thy human frame;
The offended suffering in the offender's name:
All thy misdeeds to him imputed see,
And all his righteousness devolved on thee.

For, granting we have sinned, and that the offence
Of man is made against Omnipotence,
Some price that bears proportion must be paid,
And infinite with infinite be weighed.
See then the Deist lost: remorse for vice,
Not paid, or paid inadequate in price:
What further means can Reason now direct,
Or what relief from human wit expect?
That shows us sick; and sadly are we sure
Still to be sick, till Heaven reveal the cure:
If then Heaven's will must needs be understood,
Which must, if we want cure, and Heaven be good,
Let all records of will revealed be shown;
With Scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one Sacred Book will be that one.

Proof needs not here; for whether we compare
That impious, idle, superstitious ware

Of rites, lustrations, offerings, (which before,
In various ages, various countries bore,)
With Christian faith and virtue, we shall find
None answering the great ends of human kind,
But this one rule of life, that shows us best
How God may be appeased, and mortals blest.
Whether from length of time its worth we draw,
The world is scarce more ancient than the law:
Heaven's early care prescribed for every age;
First, in the soul, and after, in the page.
Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written book,
Whence, but from heaven, could men, unskilled in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

If on the Book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true:
The doctrine, miracles; which must convince,
For heaven in them appeals to human sense;
And though they prove not, they confirm the cause,
When what is taught agrees with Nature's laws.

Then for the style, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line;
Commanding words, whose force is still the same
As the first fiat that produced our frame.
All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend,
Or sense indulged has made mankind their friend;
This only doctrine does our lusts oppose,
Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows;
Cross to our interests, curbing sense and sin;
Oppressed without, and undermined within,
It thrives through pain; its own tormentors tires,
And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can reason such effects assign,
Transcending nature, but to laws divine?

Which in that sacred volume are contained;
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordained.

But stay: the Deist here will urge anew,
No supernatural worship can be true;
Because a general law is that alone
Which must to all, and everywhere, be known:
A style so large as not this Book can claim,
Nor aught that bears revealed Religion's name.
'Tis said, the sound of a Messiah's birth
Is gone through all the habitable earth;
But still that text must be confined alone
To what was then inhabited, and known:
And what provision could from thence accrue
To Indian souls, and worlds discovered new?
In other parts it helps, that, ages past,
The Scriptures there were known, and were embraced,
Till Sin spread once again the shades of night:
What's that to these who never saw the light?

Of all objections this indeed is chief
To startle reason, stagger frail belief:
We grant, 'tis true, that Heaven from human sense
Has hid the secret paths of Providence;
But boundless wisdom, boundless mercy, may
Find even for those bewildered souls a way;
If from his nature foes may pity claim,
Much more may strangers, who ne'er heard his name.
And though no name be for salvation known,
But that of his eternal Son alone;*
Who knows how far transcending goodness can
Extend the merits of that Son to man?
Who knows what reasons may his mercy lead,
Or ignorance invincible may plead?
Not only charity bids hope the best,
But more the great apostle has expressed:

* 'All the editions read *Sons* [Son's], which seems to make a double genitive. . . . I own I should have been glad to have found an authority for reading *Son*.'—SCOTT. It does not appear to me that an authority is necessary for correcting an evident misprint, copied mechanically from one edition to another.

That, if the Gentiles, whom no law inspired,
By nature did what was by law required,
They, who the written rule had never known,
Were to themselves both rule and law alone,
To nature's plain indictment they shall plead,
And by their conscience be condemned or freed.
Most righteous doom! because a rule revealed
Is none to those from whom it was concealed.
Then, those who followed Reason's dictates right,
Lived up, and lifted high their natural light;
With Socrates may see their Maker's face,
While thousand rubric-martyrs want a place.

Nor does it baulk my charity, to find
The Egyptian bishop of another mind;
For, though his creed eternal truth contains,
'Tis hard for man to doom to endless pains
All who believed not all his zeal required;
Unless he first could prove he was inspired.
Then let us either think he meant to say,
This faith, where published, was the only way;
Or else conclude, that, Arius to confute,
The good old man, too eager in dispute,
Flew high; and, as his Christian fury rose,
Damned all for heretics who durst oppose.

Thus far my charity this path has tried;
(A much unskilful, but well-meaning guide;) [bred,
Yet what they are, even these crude thoughts were
By reading that which better thou hast read,
Thy matchless author's work; which thou, my friend,
By well translating better dost commend;
Those youthful hours which, of thy equals, most
In toys have squandered, or in vice have lost,
Those hours hast thou to nobler use employed,
And the severe delights of truth enjoyed.
Witness this weighty book, in which appears
The crabbed toil of many thoughtful years,
Spent by thy author, in the sifting care
Of Rabbins' old sophisticated ware

From gold divine, which he who well can sort;
 May afterwards make algebra a sport;
 A treasure which, if country curates buy,
 They Junius and Tremellius may defy;*
 Save pains in various readings and translations,
 And without Hebrew make most learned quotations;
 A work so full with various learning fraught,
 So nicely pondered, yet so strongly wrought,
 As Nature's height and Art's last hand required:
 As much as man could compass, uninspired.
 Where we may see what errors have been made
 Both in the copiers' and translators' trade:
 How Jewish, Popish, interests have prevailed,
 And where infallibility has failed.

For some, who have his secret meaning guessed,
 Have found our author not too much a priest;
 For fashion-sake he seems to have recourse
 To Pope, and Councils, and Tradition's force:
 But he that old traditions could subdue,
 Could not but find the weakness of the new:
 If Scripture, though derived from heavenly birth,
 Has been but carelessly preserved on earth;
 If God's own people, who of God before
 Knew what we know, and had been promised more,
 In fuller terms, of Heaven's assisting care,
 And who did neither time nor study spare
 To keep this Book untainted, unperplexed,
 Let in gross errors to corrupt the text,
 Omitted paragraphs, embroiled the sense,
 With vain traditions stopped the gaping fence,
 Which every common hand pulled up with ease,
 What safety from such brushwood helps as these?
 If written words from time are not secured,
 How can we think have oral sounds endured?

* Calvinist ministers, who translated the Bible into Latin in the sixteenth century, with learned commentaries. Tremellius translated the Bible from the Syriac. Simon, in the critical history previously referred to, criticises their labours.

Which thus transmitted, if one mouth has failed,
Immortal lies on ages are entailed;
And that some such have been, is proved too plain;
If we consider Interest, Church, and Gain.

Oh, but, says one, Tradition set aside,
Where can we hope for an unerring guide?
For since the original Scripture has been lost,
All copies disagreeing, maimed the most,
Or Christian faith can have no certain ground,
Or truth in Church Tradition must be found.

Such an omniscient Church we wish indeed;
'Twere worth both Testaments, cast in the Creed;
But if this mother be a guide so sure,
As can all doubts resolve, all truth secure,
Then her infallibility, as well
Where copies are corrupt or lame, can tell;
Restore lost canon with as little pains,
As truly explicate what still remains;
Which yet no Council dare pretend to do,
Unless, like Esdras, they could write it new;
Strange confidence, still to interpret true,
Yet not be sure that all they have explained
Is in the blest original contained.

More safe, and much more modest 'tis, to say,
God would not leave mankind without a way:
And that the Scriptures, though not everywhere
Free from corruption, or entire, or clear,
Are uncorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,
In all things which our needful faith require.
If others in the same glass better see,
'Tis for themselves they look, but not for me;
For my salvation must its doom receive,
Not from what others, but what I, believe.

Must all tradition then be set aside?
This to affirm were ignorance or pride.
Are there not many points, some needful sure
To saving faith, that Scripture leaves obscure?

Which every sect will wrest a several way,
For what one sect interprets, all sects may :
We hold, and say we prove from Scripture plain,
That Christ is God ; the bold Socinian
From the same Scripture urges he's but man.
Now what appeal can end the important suit ?
Both parts talk loudly, but the rule is mute.

Shall I speak plain, and in a nation free,
Assume an honest layman's liberty ?
I think, according to my little skill,
To my own mother-church submitting still,
That many have been saved, and many may,
Who never heard this question brought in play.
The unlettered Christian, who believes in gross,
Plods on to Heaven, and ne'er is at a loss ;
For the strait-gate would be made straiter yet,
Were none admitted there but men of wit.
The few by nature formed, with learning fraught,
Born to instruct, as others to be taught,
Must study well the sacred page ; and see
Which doctrine, this or that, does best agree
With the whole tenor of the work divine,
And plainliest points to Heaven's revealed design ;
Which exposition flows from genuine sense,
And which is forced by wit and eloquence.
Not that tradition's parts are useless here,
When general, old, disinterested, and clear :
That ancient Fathers thus expound the page,
Gives truth the reverend majesty of age ;
Confirms its force by biding every test ;
For best authorities, next rules, are best.
And still the nearer to the spring we go,
More limpid, more unsoiled, the waters flow.
Thus, first, traditions were a proof alone ;
Could we be certain such they were, so known :
But since some flaws in long descent may be,
They make not truth, but probability.

Even Arius and Pelagius durst provoke
To what the centuries preceding spoke;
Such difference is there in an oft-told tale;
But truth by its own sinews will prevail.
Tradition written, therefore, more commends
Authority, than from what voice descends:
And this, as perfect as its kind can be,
Rolls down to us the sacred history:
Which, from the Universal Church received,
Is tried, and, after, for itself believed.

The partial Papists would infer from hence,
Their Church, in last resort, should judge the sense.
But first they would assume, with wondrous art,
Themselves to be the whole, who are but part
Of that vast frame, the Church; yet grant they were
The handers down, can they from thence infer
A right to interpret? or, would they alone,
Who brought the present, claim it for their own?
The Book's a common largess to mankind,
Not more for them than every man designed;
The welcome news is in the letter found;
The carrier's not commissioned to expound.
It speaks itself, and what it does contain,
In all things needful to be known, is plain.

In times o'ergrown with rust and ignorance,
A gainful trade their clergy did advance;
When want of learning kept the laymen low,
And none but priests were authorized to know;
When what small knowledge was, in them did dwell,
And he a God who could but read or spell,—
Then mother Church did mightily prevail:
She parcelled out the Bible by retail:
But still expounded what she sold or gave,
To keep it in her power to damn and save.
Scripture was scarce, and as the market went,
Poor laymen took salvation on content,
As needy men take money, good or bad,
God's word they had not, but the priest's they had.

Yet, whate'er false conveyances they made,
The lawyer still was certain to be paid.
In those dark times they learned their knack so well,
That by long use they grew infallible.
At last, a knowing age began to inquire
If they the Book, or that did them inspire;
And, making narrower search, they found, though late,
That what they thought the priest's, was their estate;
Taught by the will produced, the written word,
How long they had been cheated on record.
Then every man, who saw the title fair,
Claimed a child's part, and put in for a share;
Consulted soberly his private good,
And saved himself as cheap as e'er he could.

'Tis true, my friend,—and far be flattery hence,—
This good had full as bad a consequence;
The Book thus put in every vulgar hand,
Which each presumed he best could understand,
The common rule was made the common prey,
And at the mercy of the rabble lay.
The tender page with horny fists was galled,
And he was gifted most that loudest bawled;
The spirit gave the doctoral degree,
And every member of a company
Was of his trade, and of the Bible, free.
Plain truths enough for needful use they found;
But men would still be itching to expound;
Each was ambitious of th' obscurest place,
No measure ta'en from knowledge, all from grace.
Study and pains were now no more their care;
Texts were explained by fasting and by prayer:
This was the fruit the private spirit brought,
Occasioned by great zeal and little thought.
While crowds unlearned, with rude devotion warm
About the sacred viands buz and swarm;
The fly-blown text creates a crawling brood,
And turns to maggots what was meant for food.

A thousand daily sects rise up and die ;
A thousand more the perished race supply :
So all we make of Heaven's discovered will,
Is, not to have it, or to use it ill.
The danger's much the same ; on several shelves
If others wreck us, or we wreck ourselves.

What then remains, but, waiving each extreme,
The tides of ignorance and pride to stem ;
Neither so rich a treasure to forego,
Nor proudly seek beyond our power to know ?
Faith is not built on disquisitions vain ;
The things we must believe are few and plain :
But since men will believe more than they need,
And every man will make himself a creed,
In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way
To learn what unsuspected ancients say ;
For 'tis not likely we should higher soar
In search of Heaven, than all the Church before ;
Nor can we be deceived, unless we see
The Scripture and the Fathers disagree.
If, after all, they stand suspected still,
(For no man's faith depends upon his will,)
'Tis some relief, that points, not clearly known,
Without much hazard may be let alone ;
And after hearing what our Church can say,
If still our reason runs another way,
That private reason 'tis more just to curb,
Than by disputes the public peace disturb.
For points obscure are of small use to learn :
But common quiet is mankind's concern.

Thus have I made my own opinions clear,
Yet neither praise expect, nor censure fear ;
And this unpolished rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose ;
For while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
Tom Sternhold's, or Tom Shadwell's rhymes will serve.

THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS:

A FUNERAL PINDARICK POEM, SACRED TO THE HAPPY MEMORY
OF KING CHARLES II

Fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt,
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet aeo.

VIRG.

[CHARLES II. died on the 6th of February, 1684-5. The reader, who is not already acquainted with the fact, will learn from this Elegy that his majesty died suddenly. He was seized with a fit on the 2nd, from which he never recovered; and his physicians announced that he died of apoplexy. This melancholy Pindaric (which was published in 1685, and ran through two editions within the year) shows the powers of the poet under singular disadvantages. The measure, over which he elsewhere displays consummate command, here seems to run away from him, like scared steeds in the circus breaking away from the hand of the master. The images are as scattered, and sometimes as difficult to follow, as the rhymes. The transitions from long to short lines, and the consequent mixture of the volatile and the austere, are frequently so capricious as to produce ludicrous effects, and impart an air of ridicule to what was meant to be solemn. The grief is forced and laboured all throughout, and the poet, in lack of true and natural emotion, throws himself upon artificial expedients which inevitably degenerate into bombast. Assuredly nothing can be more preposterous than the comparison between the reign of Charles, rent by factions and royal insincerities and tyrannies of all sorts, to the golden age; or the image of the soul retiring 'into her inmost room,' at the news of the king's death; or the description of the Duke of York running half-dressed, in his 'hasty' and 'artless' grief, to the royal chamber; or the turgid profanity of Heaven half-repenting, and the crowd of 'armed prayers' knocking at its gates; or the picture of inveterate foes upon a favourable turn in the disease, saluting each other in the streets, which, notwithstanding the admiration of a modern critic, looks very much like a caricature.

Dryden's heart was not in this poem; nor can there be a more conclusive evidence of his want of sympathy with the subject, than the necessity he felt for eking it out, by having recourse to the fustian he had long renounced. That he was capable of tender and manly feelings on such occasions is abundantly shown in his lines on the death of Oldham, and his ode to the memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew. When he felt strongly he always went direct to his purpose; and when we find him wandering off into conceits and exaggerations we may reasonably suspect that there was not much earnestness behind. He had been admitted to too close an intimacy with Charles to retain much respect for his character. The unnatural vein of eulogy in which he indulges, betrays the secret of his real distrust of himself and his hero; and the materials of which the Elegy is chiefly composed, gathering up the petty incidents of the short and fluctuating illness, the consultations and despair of the physicians, and all the fictitious pathos of the bedside, show the extremity to which he was driven in substituting personal details for that historical treatment which the death of a king obviously suggests, and of which he had already given so good a sample in the lines on Cromwell. Independently of other considerations, Dryden evidently felt that he had not been properly appreciated or rewarded by the king. But this was a matter to be touched delicately in a panegyric, and so he 'damns with faint praise' the royal encouragement of the Muses. He could hardly express his indignant sense of that equivocal and shabby patronage in plainer words than these:

Though little was their hire, and light their gains,
Yet *somewhat* to their share he threw!

And this *somewhat* is not bestowed graciously, but thrown to them, as if they were dogs or beggars! How insubstantial these alms were is thus explicitly stated:

The pension of a prince's praise is great!

And Dryden seems really to indulge in the covert malice of satire, when in the very next line he apostrophises Charles as

the great encourager of arts!"* The facility with which the poet glides into a magnificent prophecy of the glories of the new reign, winds up with becoming courtliness a performance which, in spite of a few nervous passages, is, as a whole, unworthy of his genius.]

I

THUS long my grief has kept me dumb:
 Sure there's a lethargy in mighty woe,
 Tears stand congealed, and cannot flow;
 And the sad soul retires into her inmost room;
 Tears, for a stroke foreseen, afford relief;
 But, unprovided for a sudden blow,
 Like Niobe we marble grow;
 And petrify with grief.
 Our British heaven was all serene,
 No threat'ning cloud was nigh,
 Not the least wrinkle to deform the sky;
 We lived as unconcerned and happily
 As the first age in nature's golden scene;
 Supine amidst our flowing store,
 We slept securely, and we dreamt of more;
 When suddenly the thunder-clap was heard,
 It took us, unprepared, and out of guard,
 Already lost before we feared.
 The amazing news of Charles at once were spread,
 At once the general voice declared,
 'Our gracious prince was dead.'
 No sickness known before, no slow disease,
 To soften grief by just degrees;
 But like an hurricane on Indian seas,
 The tempest rose;
 An unexpected burst of woes;

* Charles I. was a more liberal patron. Ben Jonson on two or three occasions alludes to his protection of men of letters:

'Tis not enough (thy piety is such)
 To cure the called *king's evil* with thy touch;
 But thou wilt yet a kinglier mastery try
 To cure the *poet's evil*, poverty.'

With scarce a breathing space betwixt,
 This now becalmed, and perishing the next.
 As if great Atlas from his height
 Should sink beneath his heavenly weight,
 And with a mighty flaw, the flaming wall,
 As once it shall, [this nether ball ;
 Should gape immense, and, rushing down, o'erwhelm
 So swift and so surprising was our fear :
 Our Atlas fell indeed ; but Hercules was near.

2

His pious brother, sure the best
 Who ever bore that name,
 Was newly risen from his rest,
 And with a fervent flame,
 His usual morning vows had just addressed,
 For his dear sovereign's health ;
 And hoped to have them heard,
 In long increase of years,
 In honour, fame, and wealth :
 Guiltless of greatness, thus he always prayed,
 Nor knew, nor wished, those vows he made
 On his own head should be repaid.
 Soon as the ill-omened rumour reached his ear,
 (Ill news is winged with fate, and flies apace,)
 Who can describe the amazement of his face !
 Horror in all his pomp was there,
 Mute, and magnificent, without a tear ;
 And then the hero first was seen to fear.
 Half unarrayed he ran to his relief,
 So hasty and so artless was his grief :
 Approaching greatness met him with her charms
 Of power and future state ;
 But looked so ghastly in a brother's fate,
 He shook her from his arms.
 Arrived within the mournful room, he saw
 A wild distraction, void of awe,
 And arbitrary grief unbounded by a law.
 God's image, God's anointed, lay
 Without motion, pulse, or breath,

A senseless lump of sacred clay,
An image now of death.
Amidst his sad attendants' groans and cries,
The lines of that adored forgiving face,
Distorted from their native grace;
An iron slumber sat on his majestic eyes.
The pious duke—Forbear, audacious muse!
No terms thy feeble art can use
Are able to adorn so vast a woe:
The grief of all the rest like subject-grief did show
His, like a sovereign did transcend;
No wife, no brother, such a grief could know,
Nor any name but friend.

3

O wondrous changes of a fatal scene,
Still varying to the last!
Heaven, though its hard decree was past,
Seemed pointing to a gracious turn again:
And Death's uplifted arm arrested in its haste.
Heaven half repented of the doom,
And almost grieved it had foreseen,
What by foresight it willed eternally to come.
Mercy above did hourly plead
For her resemblance here below;
And mild forgiveness intercede
To stop the coming blow.
New miracles approached the ethereal throne,
Such as his wondrous life had oft and lately known.
And urged that still they might be shown.
On earth his pious brother prayed and vowed,
Renouncing greatness at so dear a rate,
Himself defending what he could,
From all the glories of his future fate.
With him the innumerable crowd
Of armed prayers
Knocked at the gates of heaven, and knocked aloud;
The first well-meaning rude petitioners.

All for his life assailed the throne, [own.
 All would have bribed the skies by offering up their
 So great a throng not heaven itself could bar;
 'Twas almost borne by force, as in the giants' war.
 The prayers, at least, for his reprieve were heard;
 His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferred:
 Against the sun the shadow went;
 Five days, those five degrees, were lent,
 To form our patience and prepare the event.
 The second causes took the swift command,
 The medicinal head, the ready hand,
 All eager to perform their part;
 All but eternal doom was conquered by their art:
 Once more the fleeting soul came back
 To inspire the mortal frame;
 And in the body took a doubtful stand,
 Doubtful and hovering, like expiring flame, [brand.
 That mounts and falls by turns, and trembles o'er the

4

The joyful short-lived news soon spread around,
 Took the same train, the same impetuous bound:
 The drooping town in smiles again was dressed,
 Gladness in every face expressed,
 Their eyes before their tongues confessed.
 Men met each other with erected look,
 The steps were higher that they took;
 Friends to congratulate their friends made haste,
 And long inveterate foes saluted as they passed.
 Above the rest heroic James appeared
 Exalted more, because he more had feared:
 His manly heart, whose noble pride
 Was still above
 Dissembled hate, or varnished love,
 Its more than common transport could not hide;
 But like an eagle* rode in triumph o'er the tide.

* A tide swelling above another tide, which I myself observed in the river Trent.—Orig. Ed.

Thus, in alternate course,
 The tyrant passions, hope and fear,
 Did in extremes appear,
 And flashed upon the soul with equal force.
 Thus, at half ebb, a rolling sea
 Returns, and wins upon the shore;
 The watery herd, affrighted at the roar,
 Rest on their fins awhile, and stay,
 Then backward take their wondering way;
 The prophet wonders more than they,
 At prodigies but rarely seen before, [their sway.
 And cries,—a king must fall, or kingdoms change
 Such were our counter-tides at land, and so
 Presaging of the fatal blow,
 In their prodigious ebb and flow.
 The royal soul, that, like the labouring moon,
 By charms of art was hurried down,
 Forced with regret to leave her native sphere,
 Came but awhile on liking here:
 Soon weary of the painful strife,
 And made but faint essays of life:
 An evening light
 Soon shut in night;
 A strong distemper, and a weak relief,
 Short intervals of joy, and long returns of grief.

5

The sons of art all medicines tried,
 And every noble remedy applied,
 With emulation each essayed
 His utmost skill, nay more, they prayed:
 Never was losing game with better conduct played.
 Death never won a stake with greater toil,
 Nor e'er was fate so near a foil:
 But, like a fortress on a rock, [mock;
 The impregnable disease their vain attempts did
 They mined it near, they battered from afar
 With all the cannon of the medicinal war;

No gentle means could be essayed,
 'Twas beyond parley when the siege was laid
 The extremest ways they first ordain,
 Prescribing such intolerable pain,
 As none but Cæsar could sustain;
 Undaunted Cæsar underwent
 The malice of their art, nor bent
 Beneath whate'er their pious rigour could invent.
 In five such days he suffered more
 Than any suffered in his reign before;
 More, infinitely more, than he,
 Against the worst of rebels, could decree,
 A traitor, or twice pardoned enemy.
 Now art was tired without success,
 No racks could make the stubborn malady confess.
 The vain insurers of life,
 And they who most performed and promised less,
 Even Short* himself forsook the unequal strife.
 Death and despair were in their looks,
 No longer they consult their memories or books;
 Like helpless friends, who view from shore
 The labouring ship, and hear the tempest roar;
 So stood they with their arms across,
 Not to assist, but to deplore
 The inevitable loss.

6

Death was denounced; that frightful sound
 Which even the best can hardly bear;
 He took the summons void of fear,
 And unconcernedly cast his eyes around,
 As if to find and dare the grisly challenger.
 What death could do he lately tried,
 When in four days he more than died.
 The same assurance all his words did grace;

* One of the physicians in attendance on the king in his last illness.

The same majestic mildness held its place,
 Nor lost the monarch in his dying face.
 Intrepid, pious, merciful, and brave,
 He looked as when he conquered and forgave.

7

As if some angel had been sent
 To lengthen out his government,
 And to foretel as many years again,
 As he had numbered in his happy reign,
 So cheerfully he took the doom
 Of his departing breath;
 Nor shrunk, nor stept aside for death:
 But with unaltered pace kept on,
 Providing for events to come,
 When he resigned the throne.
 Still he maintained his kingly state;
 And grew familiar with his fate.
 Kind, good, and gracious, to the last,
 On all he loved before, his dying beams he cast:
 Oh, truly good, and truly great,
 For glorious as he rose, benignly so he set!
 All that on earth he held most dear,
 He recommended to his care,
 To whom both Heaven
 The right had given,
 And his own love bequeathed supreme command:
 He took and pressed that ever-loyal hand,
 Which could, in peace, secure his reign,
 Which could, in wars, his power maintain,
 That hand, on which no plighted vows were ever
 Well, for so great a trust, he chose [vain.
 A prince who never disobeyed;
 Not when the most severe commands were laid;
 Nor want, nor exile, with his duty weighed:
 A prince on whom, if Heaven its eyes could close,
 The welfare of the world it safely might repose.

8

That king who lived to God's own heart,
Yet less serenely died than he;
Charles left behind no harsh decree
For schoolmen, with laborious art,
To salve from cruelty:
Those, for whom love could no excuses frame,
He graciously forgot to name.
Thus far my muse, though rudely, has designed
Some faint resemblance of his godlike mind:
But neither pen nor pencil can express
The parting brothers' tenderness;
Though that's a term too mean and low;
The blest above a kinder word may know;
But what they did, and what they said,
The monarch who triumphant went,
The militant who staid,
Like painters, when their heightening arts are spent,
I cast into a shade.
That all-forgiving king,
The type of Him above,
That inexhausted spring
Of clemency and love;
Himself to his next self accused,
And asked that pardon which he ne'er refused;
For faults not his, for guilt and crimes
Of godless men, and of rebellious times;
For an hard exile, kindly meant,
When his ungrateful country sent
Their best Camillus into banishment, [consent.
And forced their sovereign's act,—they could not his
Oh, how much rather had that injured chief
Repeated all his sufferings past,
Than hear a pardon begged at last,
Which given, could give the dying no relief!
He bent, he sunk beneath his grief:
His dauntless heart would fain have held
From weeping, but his eyes rebelled.

Perhaps the god-like hero, in his breast,
Disdained, or was ashamed, to show
So weak, so womanish a woe, [confest
Which yet the brother and the friend so plenteously

9

Amidst that silent shower, the royal mind
An easy passage found,
And left its sacred earth behind;
Nor murmuring groan expressed, nor labouring sound,
Nor any least tumultuous breath;
Calm was his life, and quiet was his death.
Soft as those gentle whispers were,
In which the Almighty did appear;
By the still voice the prophet knew him there.
That peace which made thy prosperous reign to shine,
That peace thou leavest to thy imperial line,
That peace, oh happy shade, be ever thine!

10

For all those joys thy restoration brought,
For all the miracles it wrought,
For all the healing balm thy mercy poured
Into the nation's bleeding wound,
And care, that after kept it sound,
For numerous blessings yearly showered,
And property with plenty crowned;
For freedom, still maintained alive,
Freedom, which in no other land will thrive,
Freedom, an English subject's sole prerogative,
Without whose charms, even peace would be
But a dull, quiet slavery;—
For these, and more, accept our pious praise;
'Tis all the subsidy
The present age can raise,
The rest is charged on late posterity.
Posterity is charged the more,
Because the large abounding store
To them, and to their heirs, is still entailed by thee.

Succession of a long descent,
Which chastely in the channels ran,
And from our demigods began,
Equal almost to time in its extent,
Through hazards numberless and great,
Thou hast derived this mighty blessing down,
And fixed the fairest gem that decks the imperial crown.
Not faction, when it shook thy regal seat,
Not senates, insolently loud,
Those echoes of a thoughtless crowd,
Not foreign or domestic treachery,
Could warp thy soul to their unjust decree.
So much thy foes thy manly mind mistook,
Who judged it by the mildness of thy look;
Like a well-tempered sword, it bent at will,
But kept the native toughness of the steel.

II

Be true, O Clio, to thy hero's name!
But draw him strictly so;
That all who view the piece may know;
He needs no trappings of fictitious fame,
The load's too weighty; thou mayest choose
Some parts of praise, and some refuse; [the muse.
Write, that his annals may be thought more lavish than
In scanty truth thou hast confined
The virtues of a royal mind,
Forgiving, bounteous, humble, just, and kind:
His conversation, wit, and parts,
His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,
Were such, dead authors could not give,
But habitudes of those who live,
Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive:
He drained from all, and all they knew;
His apprehension quick, his judgment true;
That the most learned, with shame, confess
His knowledge more, his reading only less.

12

Amidst the peaceful triumphs of his reign,
 What wonder if the kindly beams he shed
 Revived the drooping Arts again,
 If Science raised her head,
 And soft Humanity, that from rebellion fled:
 Our isle, indeed, too fruitful was before;
 But all uncultivated lay,
 Out of the solar walk, and Heaven's highway;
 With rank Geneva weeds run o'er,
 And cockle, at the best, amidst the corn it bore:
 The royal husbandman appeared,
 And ploughed, and sowed, and tilled,
 The thorns he rooted out, the rubbish cleared,
 And blest the obedient field.
 When straight a double harvest rose,
 Such as the swarthy Indian mows;
 Or happier climates near the line;
 Or paradise, manured and dressed by hands divine.

13

As when the new-born phoenix takes his way,
 His rich paternal regions to survey,
 Of airy choristers a numerous train
 Attends his wondrous progress o'er the plain;
 So, rising from his father's urn,
 So glorious did our Charles return;
 The officious Muses came along,
 A gay, harmonious choir, like angels' ever young;
 The Muse, that mourns him now, his happy triumph sung.
 Even they could thrive in his auspicious reign;
 And such a plenteous crop they bore,
 Of purest and well-winnowed grain,
 As Britain never knew before;
 Though little was their hire, and light their gain,
 Yet somewhat to their share he threw;
 Fed from his hand, they sung and flew,
 Like birds of Paradise, that lived on morning dew.

Oh, never let their lays his name forget!
The pension of a prince's praise is great.
Live then, thou great encourager of arts,
Live ever in our thankful hearts;
Live blest above, almost invoked below;
Live and receive this pious vow,
Our patron once, our guardian angel now!
Thou Fabius of a sinking state,
Who didst by wise delays divert our fate,
When faction like a tempest rose,
In death's most hideous form,
Then art to rage thou didst oppose,
To weather out the storm;
Not quitting thy supreme command,
Thou held'st the rudder with a steady hand,
Till safely on the shore the bark did land;
The bark, that all our blessings brought,
Charged with thyself and James, a doubly royal freight.

14

Oh, frail estate of human things,
And slippery hopes below!
Now to our cost your emptiness we know;
For 'tis a lesson dearly bought,
Assurance here is never to be sought.
The best, and best beloved of kings,
And best deserving to be so,
When scarce he had escaped the fatal blow
Of faction and conspiracy,
Death did his promised hopes destroy;
He toiled, he gained, but lived not to enjoy.
What mists of Providence are these
Through which we cannot see!
So saints, by supernatural power set free,
Are left at last in martyrdom to die;
Such is the end of oft-repeated miracles.—
Forgive me, Heaven, that impious thought,
'Twas grief for Charles, to madness wrought,

That questioned thy supreme decree!
 Thou didst his gracious reign prolong,
 Even in thy saints' and angels' wrong,
 His fellow-citizens of immortality:
 For twelve long years of exile borne,
 Twice twelve we numbered since his blest return:
 So strictly wert thou just to pay,
 Even to the driblet of a day.
 Yet still we murmur, and complain
 The quails and manna should no longer rain:
 Those miracles 'twere needless to renew;
 The chosen stock has now the promised land in view.

15

A warlike prince ascends the regal state,
 A prince long exercised by fate:
 Long may he keep, though he obtains it late.
 Heroes in heaven's peculiar mould are cast,
 They, and their poets, are not formed in haste;
 Man was the first in God's design, and man was made:
 False heroes, made by flattery so, [the last.
 Heaven can strike out, like sparkles, at a blow;
 But ere a prince is to perfection brought,
 He costs Omnipotence a second thought.

With toil and sweat,
 With hardening cold, and forming heat,
 The Cyclops did their strokes repeat,
 Before the impenetrable shield was wrought.
 It looks as if the Maker would not own
 The noble work for his,
 Before 'twas tried and found a master-piece.

16

View then a monarch ripened for a throne.
 Alcides thus his race began,
 O'er infancy he swiftly ran;
 The future God at first was more than man:

Dangers and toils, and Juno's hate,
Even o'er his cradle lay in wait,
And there he grappled first with fate;
In his young hands the hissing snakes he pressed,
So early was the Deity confessed;
Thus, by degrees, he rose to Jove's imperial seat;
Thus difficulties prove a soul legitimately great.
Like his, our hero's infancy was tried;
Betimes the furies did their snakes provide;
And to his infant arms oppose
His father's rebels, and his brother's foes;
The more oppressed, the higher still he rose.
Those were the preludes of his fate,
That formed his manhood, to subdue
The hydra of the many-headed hissing crew

17

As after Numa's peaceful reign
The martial Ancus did the sceptre wield,
Furbished the rusty sword again,
Resumed the long-forgotten shield,
And led the Latins to the dusty field;
So James the drowsy genius wakes
Of Britain, long entranced in charms,
Restive and slumbering on its arms;
'Tis roused, and, with a new-strung nerve, the spear
No neighing of the warrior steeds, [already shakes,
No drum, or louder trumpet, needs
To inspire the coward, warm the cold;
His voice, his sole appearance, makes them bold.
Gaul and Batavia dread the impending blow;
Too well the vigour of that arm they know;
They lick the dust, and crouch beneath their fatal foe.
Long may they fear this awful prince,
And not provoke his lingering sword;
Peace is their only sure defence,
Their best security his word.

In all the changes of his doubtful state,
His truth, like Heaven's, was kept inviolate,
For him to promise is to make it fate.
His valour can triumph o'er land and main;
With broken oaths his fame he will not stain;
With conquest basely bought, and with inglorious gain

18

For once, O Heaven, unfold thy adamant book;
And let his wondering senate see,
If not thy firm, immutable decree,
At least the second page of strong contingency,
Such as consists with wills originally free.

Let them with glad amazement look
On what their happiness may be;
Let them not still be obstinately blind,
Still to divert the good thou hast designed,
Or, with malignant penury,
To starve the royal virtues of his mind.
Faith is a Christian's and a subject's test;
Oh, give them to believe, and they are surely blest.
They do; and with a distant view I see
The amended vows of English loyalty;
And all beyond that object, there appears
The long retinue of a prosperous reign,

A series of successful years,
In orderly array, a martial, manly train.

Behold even the remoter shores,
A conquering navy proudly spread;
The British cannon formidably roars,
While, starting from his oozy bed,
The asserted ocean rears his reverend head;
To view and recognise his ancient lord again;

And, with a willing hand, restores
The fasces of the main.

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW,

EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER ARTS OF POESY AND PAINTING.

AN ODE.

1685.

[COMING next in chronological order, this elegiac ode affords an immediate opportunity of contrast with the preceding Pindaric. There are some conceits in it, of which, perhaps, the brevet of the young lady in the second line of the first stanza is the most conspicuous; but it is, nevertheless, a pure specimen of this form of composition, and has been pronounced by Dr. Johnson the noblest ode in our language. 'The first part,' he observes, 'flows with a torrent of enthusiasm.' To this opinion it is only fair to oppose that of Mr. Hallam, who says that it has a few fine lines, mingled with a far greater number ill conceived and ill expressed; that it has Dryden's spirit, but is too faulty for high praise. Mrs. Anne was the sister of the facetious Thomas Killigrew. She was one of the maids of honour to the Duchess of York, and died of small-pox, in 1685, in the 25th year of her age. A poetess and a painter—writing occasional verses, and indulging her taste in every department of art, from the portraits of the royal family to landscapes and fruit pieces—she appears to have been an accomplished member of a remarkable family. A book called *Country Conversations*, published in 1694, says that a friend of the author's fell in love with the 'memory' of Anne Killigrew from merely seeing some of her pictures and poems.]

I

THOU youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
 Made in the last promotion of the blessed;
 Whose palms, new plucked from Paradise,
 In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
 Rich with immortal green above the rest:

Whether, adopted to some neighbouring star,
 Thou rollest above us, in thy wandering race,
 Or, in procession fixed and regular,
 Movest with the heaven's majestic pace;
 Or, called to more superior bliss,
 Thou treadest with seraphims the vast abyss:
 Whatever happy region is thy place,
 Cease thy celestial song a little space;
 Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
 Since Heaven's eternal year is thine.
 Hear, then, a mortal Muse thy praise rehearse,
 In no ignoble verse;
 But such as thy own voice did practise here,
 When thy first fruits of Poesy were given,
 To make thyself a welcome inmate there;
 While yet a young probationer,
 And candidate of heaven.

2

If by traduction came thy mind,
 Our wonder is the less, to find
 A soul so charming from a stock so good;
 Thy father was transfused into thy blood:
 So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,
 An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.
 But if thy pre-existing soul
 Was formed at first, with myriads more,
 It did through all the mighty poets roll,
 Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
 And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
 If so, then cease thy flight, O, heaven-born mind!
 Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore:
 Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find,
 Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
 Return, to fill or mend the choir of thy celestial kind

3

May we presume to say, that, at thy birth,
 New joy was sprung in heaven as well as here on earth?

For sure the milder planets did combine
 On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
 And even the most malicious were in trine.
 Thy brother-angels at thy birth
 Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
 That all the people of the sky
 Might know a poetess was born on earth;
 And then, if ever, mortal ears
 Had heard the music of the spheres.
 And if no clustering swarm of bees
 On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden dew,
 'Twas that such vulgar miracles
 Heaven had not leisure to renew:
 For all thy blest fraternity of love
 Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy holiday above.

4

O gracious God! how far have we
 Profaned thy heavenly gift of Poesy!
 Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
 Debased to each obscene and impious use,
 Whose harmony was first ordained above,
 For tongues of angels, and for hymns of love!
 Oh wretched we! why were we hurried down
 This lubrique and adulterate age,
 (Nay, added fat pollutions of our own,)
 To increase the streaming ordures of the stage?
 What can we say to excuse our second fall?
 Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all:
 Her Arethusian stream remains unsoiled,
 Unmixed with foreign filth, and undefiled;
 Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.*

5

Art she had none, yet wanted none,
 For Nature did that want supply:

* 'In wit a man, simplicity a child.'—*Pope*.

So rich in treasures of her own,
 She might our boasted stores defy:
 Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
 That it seemed borrowed, where 'twas only born.
 Her morals, too, were in her bosom bred,
 By great examples daily fed,
 What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
 And to be read herself she need not fear;
 Each test, and every light, her Muse will bear,
 Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
 Even love (for love sometimes her Muse expressed),
 Was but a lambent flame which played about her breast;
 Light as the vapours of a morning dream,
 So cold herself, whilst she such warmth expressed,
 'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

6

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
 One would have thought she should have been content
 To manage well that mighty government;
 But what can young ambitious souls confine?
 To the next realm she stretched her sway,
 For Painture near adjoining lay,
 A plenteous province, and alluring prey.
 A Chamber of Dependencies was framed,
 (As conquerors will never want pretence,
 When armed, to justify the offence),
 And the whole fief, in right of poetry, she claimed.
 The country open lay without defence;
 For poets frequent inroads there had made,
 And perfectly could represent
 The shape, the face, with every lineament,
 And all the largedomains which the Dumb Sister swayed;
 All bowed beneath her government,
 Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
 Her pencil drew whate'er her soul designed, [mind.
 And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her

The silvan scenes of herds and flocks,
 And fruitful plains and barren rocks,
 Of shallow brooks, that flowed so clear
 The bottom did the top appear;
 Of deeper, too, and ampler floods,
 Which, as in mirrors, showed the woods;
 Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
 And perspectives of pleasant glades,
 Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
 And shaggy satyrs standing near,
 Which them at once admire and fear.

The ruins, too, of some majestic piece,
 Boasting the power of ancient Rome or Greece,
 Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
 And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye;
 What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
 Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
 So strange a 'concourse ne'er was seen before,
 But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

7

The scene then changed; with bold erected look
 Our martial king the sight with reverence strook:
 For, not content to express his outward part,
 Her hand called out the image of his heart:
 His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
 His high-designing thoughts were figured there, .
 As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.
 Our phoenix queen was portrayed, too, so bright,
 Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
 Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
 Were all observed, as well as heavenly face.
 With such a peerless majesty she stands,
 As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands;
 Before a train of heroines was seen,
 In beauty foremost, as in rank, the queen.

Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
 But like a ball of fire, the further thrown,

Still with a greater blaze she shone,
 And her bright soul broke out on every side.
 What next she had designed, Heaven only knows:
 To such immoderate growth her conquest rose,
 That fate alone its progress could oppose.

8

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
 The well-proportioned shape, and beauteous face,
 Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
 In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
 Not wit, nor piety could fate prevent;
 Nor was the cruel destiny content
 To finish all the murder at a blow,
 To sweep at once her life, and beauty too;
 But, like a hardened felon, took a pride
 To work more mischievously slow,
 And plundered first, and then destroyed.
 O double sacrilege on things divine,
 To rob the relic, and deface the shrine!
 But thus Orinda died: *
 Heaven, by the same disease did both translate;
 As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

9

Meantime, her warlike brother on the seas
 His waving streamers to the winds displays,
 And vows for his return, with vain devotion, pays.
 Ah, generous youth! that wish forbear,
 The winds too soon will waft thee here!
 Slack all thy sails, and fear to come,
 Alas, thou knowest not, thou art wrecked at home!
 No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
 Thou hast already had her last embrace.
 But look aloft, and if thou kenest from far,
 Among the Pleiads, a new kindled star,

* Mrs. Katherine Phillips—the 'matchless Orinda,' whose poems were published in folio after her decease—died also of small-pox.

If any sparkles than the rest more bright,
'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

IO

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When, in the Valley of Jehosopha,
The judging God shall close the book of fate,
And there the last assizes keep,
For those who wake, and those who sleep;
When rattling bones together fly
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are covered with the lightest ground;
And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
Like mounting larks, to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint, before the choir shall go,
As harbinger of Heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learned below.*

* Dr. J. Warton has utterly condemned this ode, in opposition to the opinion of Dr. Johnson, which, he says, exhibits 'an unaccountable perversity of judgment, and want of taste for true poetry.' He pronounces the first stanza, which Johnson selected for special admiration, to be 'absolutely unintelligible.' His note upon the poem, however most readers may demur to its justice, is curious on account of its allusions to Johnson. 'Examples of bad writing, of timid expressions, violent metaphors, far-sought conceits, hyperbolic adulation, unnatural amplifications, interspersed, as usual, with fine lines, might be collected from this applauded ode, so very inferior in all respects to the divine *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*. But such a paradoxical judgment cannot be wondered at in a critic that despised the *Lycidas* of Milton, and the *Bard* of Gray. I have been censured, I am informed, for contradicting some of Johnson's critical opinions. As I knew him well, I ever respected his talents, and more so his integrity; but a love of paradox and contradiction, at the bottom of which was vanity, gave an unpleasant tincture to his manners, and made his conversation bolsterous and offensive. I often used to tell the mild and sensible Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he and his friends had contributed to spoil Johnson, by constantly and cowardly assenting to all he advanced on

TO MR. NORTHLEIGH,

AUTHOR OF THE 'PARALLEL,' ON HIS TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH
MONARCHY.

[MR. NORTHLEIGH was a law student in the Inner Temple, who wrote some tracts on the Tory side that attracted attention. He afterwards became a physician. He was eight-and-twenty when he published the book which drew from Dryden this compliment on his precocity. It was entitled, *The Triumph of our Monarchy over the Plots and Principles of our Rebels and Republicans, being Remarks on their most eminent Libels.* 1685.]

SO Joseph, yet a youth, expounded well
The boding dream, and did the event foretell;
Judged by the past, and drew the Parallel.
Thus early Solomon the truth explored,
The right awarded, and the babe restored.
Thus Daniel, ere to prophesy he grew,
The perjured Presbyters did first subdue,
And freed Susanna from the canting crew.
Well may our monarchy triumphant stand,
While warlike James protects both sea and land;
And, under covert of his sevenfold shield,
Thou send'st thy shafts to scour the distant field.
By law thy powerful pen has set us free;
Thou studiest that, and that may study thee.

any subject. Mr. Burke only kept him in order, as did Mr. Beauclerc also, sometimes by his playful wit. It was a great pleasure for Beauclerc to lay traps for him, to induce him to oppose and contradict one day what he had maintained on a former.'

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

A POEM. IN THREE PARTS.

PART THE FIRST.

[LITTLE more than four years elapsed between the publication of the *Religio Laici* and the *Hind and the Panther*, which was licensed on the 11th of April, 1687, but which Mr. Malone informs us was written in the preceding year. In the interval, Dryden had embraced the Roman-catholic religion. An indication of the change that was taking place in his opinions may be detected in the last stanza of the *Threnodia Augustalis*; and in the *Hind and the Panther* he throws off all disguise and hesitation, and, with the usual zeal of the proselyte, assails the church he had renounced.

The form selected is ill suited to his purpose. Employing the machinery of a fable, without being able to maintain its attractions, or work out its moral, he collects an assembly of beasts, as representatives of the different denominations, and through this clumsy contrivance raises the whole controversy between the two churches and the branch sects of Protestantism. Thus, the Roman-catholic Church is represented by the 'milk white hind,' and the Church of England by the 'spotted panther' (the contrast conveying a hint of infallibility on the one side, and error on the other); while the 'bloody bear' represents the Independents; the 'quaking hare,' the Quakers; the 'buffoon ape,' the Free-thinkers; the 'bristled baptist boar,' the Anabaptist; 'false Reynard,' the Unitarians; and the 'wolf,' the Presbytery; king James II. figuring in the midst of the strange congregation as the 'British Lion!' Pursuing this zoological allegory into the regions of mythology, he completes the scheme by presenting the founder of Christianity under the character of Pan. The incongruity of the design was effectively ridiculed by a host

of critics.* It was shown, that the choice of the hind as a nobler and more beautiful creature than the panther was a palpable blunder, and that the introduction of the panther into England, which never bred a panther, was a still more glaring absurdity. Granting, however, an indemnity for such anomalies as these, it was indispensable that the beasts when once put into action should at least preserve the attributes of their kind. But these are controversial specimens, and confound all our ideas of natural history allegory. The panther is tost on a sea of wild belief, and being much perplexed on the subject of tradition, refers to the Scripture as containing the faith by which he hopes to be saved; and the hind, trusting to an authority of an earlier date, professes the faith that was preached by the Saviour before the Scriptures were written. In this manner they sink their animal instincts in a polemical debate, and, instead of discussing questions of provender or the seasons incidental to their native condition, plunge into the subtleties of religious disputation.† The incongruity clearly consists, not in assembling these animals in an allegory for moral or satirical purposes, but in assigning

* The most successful of the numerous answers to the *Hind and Panther*, was the *Country and City Mouse*, by Montague and Prior. Tom Brown also assailed Dryden in some *Reflections on the Hind and Panther*, calling him 'an endless scribbler, an empty politician, an insolent poet, and an idle pretender to controversy'—a tolerably fair specimen of the ribaldry that was constantly launched against him.

† Sir Walter Scott has undertaken the defence of these incongruities, which he calls 'a species of mixed composition.' But his defence leaves the case much in the same predicament in which he found it. He is forced at last to call it a 'licence,' and to own that 'this licence appears less pardonable in the First Part, where Dryden professes to use the majestic turn of heroic poetry, than in those which are dedicated to argument and satire.' This way of reasoning is singularly loose and irresponsible. If Dryden was justified in availing himself of this licence, he was justified in using it throughout. The poem must be viewed in its entirety, and tested by an uniform standard of some kind. To have restrained his licence in one part, and relaxed it in another, would have rendered the work as a whole still more incoherent than it is. But Scott seems to admit the full force of the critical objection, when he says that the licence is 'less pardonable' in one place than another; which is tantamount to saying that it is not pardonable anywhere.

functions to them which at once destroy the illusion of allegory. Whatever is said or done by birds and beasts should be conformable with their natures; and the art of such compositions is to convey a covert meaning through a representation that shall be in all respects consistent in itself. The finest examples of allegorical writing are to be found in the Bible, where this principle is strictly observed.* The fabulists have rarely departed from it; and their lessons on human conduct, with few exceptions, are presented in a shape reconcilable to the habits and characteristics of the animals employed to illustrate and enforce them. In the *Hind and the Panther* this essential propriety of treatment is utterly disregarded. The creatures of the forest are made to discourse like a conclave of ecclesiastics; and they display so much learning and earnestness about heresies, texts, and interpretations, that we are compelled to put the interlocutors wholly out of the question, and concentrate our attention exclusively upon the subject in debate, if we would escape the ludicrous association of ideas suggested by their combination. It is all well so long as the milk-white hind, representing the Roman-catholic Church, feeds on lawns and ranges the woods, and is chased with hounds and horns. This sort of description is within the province of allegory, and is equally applicable, in its direct and implied sense, to the hind and the Church. But when she begins to talk about the real presence, and to insist on the pope and the councils as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, the spirit of allegory vanishes at once, and we become involved in a labyrinth of inextricable absurdities.

These observations relate only to the form. The substance of the poem offers a different topic for consideration. If we discard the structure, and confine ourselves to the arguments of which the hinds, and panthers, bears, hares, and apes are merely the vehicles, we shall have as much occasion for admiring the skill with which Dryden has conducted the debate, as, on the other hand, to condemn his grotesque machinery.

* As an illustration, see the parable of the Vineyard in Isaiah, ch. v.

In this poem he exhibits in perfection his great power of rendering verse subservient to every possible process of reasoning. There is no form of argument which is not here illustrated with a brevity and completeness, a sententious weight of thought, and a vigour and animation of expression unparalleled in our language. He has not only exhausted the controversy, but placed every separate particle of it in the clearest light. His lines supply texts on both sides—but especially on his own—from which all matters at issue may be elaborated with implicit confidence in their soundness. There is no weakness or negligence anywhere. His logic is close, searching, and conclusive. The metrical form not only never stands in the way of the argument, but always imparts lucidity to it, and carries us to its irresistible results, with a swiftness and certainty unattainable in prose. The interest never flags for a moment. The contest is maintained with a rebounding vivacity that keeps the attention incessantly on the alert; the arguments are happily relieved by flashes of wit, and snatches of description; and the whole is written with the rapidity and impulse of a conception struck off at a single heat. In this piece, also, Dryden discloses his final scheme of versification. From the constant use of the triplet we may conclude that he now considered it an established right, (although it may be almost regarded, at least, in its frequency, as an innovation of his own,)* and that he had recourse to it to break the monotony of the couplet, and give variety to the verse. The same observation will apply to the Alexandrine, which he employs at will. It will be observed, also, that he rarely runs one line into another, often completes the sense in the couplet, and, perhaps, there is not

* This must be understood to apply exclusively to the heroic measure. Triplets were frequently used by preceding poets, and by the dramatists of the sixteenth century in their songs. Herrick abounds in them, and Cartwright's poem, on the *Art of Vaulting*, is in triplets. But the measures in which they are employed are short, and the pieces chiefly of a lyrical character. Dryden was the first poet who introduced them extensively into the heroic verse. Some of his Prologues and Epilogues consist entirely of triplets.

a single instance to be detected in which he extends the expression unnecessarily, or appears to be forced into the use of an expletive by the necessities of rhyme or measure.

Dryden has himself so clearly explained the plan of the poem, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon the special characteristics of the three parts into which it is divided. The first part introduces the characters, and leads up to the controversy, which occupies the whole of the second part, and is resumed in a more familiar manner, and concluded in the third. Dryden says that he aimed at majesty in the first part, perspicuity in the second, and the ease of domestic conversation in the third; but most readers will agree with Dr. Johnson, that the differences are not very perceptible. 'The first,' he observes, 'has familiar, and the two others have sonorous, lines; the original incongruity runs through the whole.'

While all readers will concur in assigning to this poem the highest place, as an example of what Dr. Johnson calls 'poetical ratiocination,' and most will agree with Mr. Hallam, in thinking, that he who could argue as powerfully as the Hind may well be allowed to have thought himself in the right, irreconcilable differences of opinion must always exist upon the theological questions discussed, and the candour, or the want of it, shown in the discussion. One thing is plain—that Dryden has here thrown the weight of his acumen, his learning, and his zeal, into his vindication of the doctrines, authority, and practice of the Church of Rome, and that he has presented the Church of England, and the dissenting sects, in the most unfavourable and odious aspects. The argument is not fairly balanced. The wit, the ridicule, the subtlety, and the triumph, are mainly on one side. As Dryden, however, has himself done full justice to the other side of the controversy in the *Religio Laici*, I have ventured to restore the equilibrium by collecting into the notes a few extracts from that poem bearing directly on some of the salient points left undefended in the *Hind and the Panther*. These opposing passages are not brought into juxtaposition

for the purpose of suggesting an imputation of inconsistency against the writer. A change of opinion does not necessarily involve any inconsistency whatever. But it is curious to observe how ably this vigorous thinker sustained at different periods different views of the same facts and doctrines. The two voices, the backward and the forward, of the 'delicate monster,' are here made to speak together, so that future disputants may quote either with equal authority.]

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE nation is in too high a ferment for me to expect either fair war, or even so much as fair quarter, from a reader of the opposite party. All men are engaged either on this side or that; and though conscience is the common word which is given by both, yet if a writer fall among enemies, and cannot give the marks of *their* conscience, he is knocked down before the reasons of his own are heard. A preface, therefore, which is but a bespeaking of favour, is altogether useless. What I desire the reader should know concerning me, he will find in the body of the poem, if he have but the patience to peruse it. Only, this advertisement let him take beforehand, which relates to the merits of the cause. No general characters of parties (call them either Sects or Churches) can be so fully and exactly drawn, as to comprehend all the several members of them; at least all such as are received under that denomination. For example: there are some of the Church by law established who envy not liberty of conscience to Dissenters; as being well satisfied that, according to their own principles, they ought not to persecute them. Yet these, by reason of their fewness, I could not distinguish from the numbers of the rest, with whom they are embodied in one common name. On the other side, there are many of our Sects, and more indeed than I could reasonably have hoped, who have withdrawn themselves from the communion of the Panther, and embraced this gracious indulgence of his majesty in point of toleration. But neither to the one nor the other of these is this satire any way intended: it is aimed only at the refractory and disobedient on either side. For those who have come over to the royal party are consequently supposed to be out of gun-shot. Our physicians have observed, that, in process of time, some diseases have abated of their virulence, and have in a manner worn out their malignity, so as to be no longer

mortal: and why may not I suppose the same concerning some of those who have formerly been enemies to Kingly Government, as well as Catholic religion? I hope they have now another notion of both, as having found, by comfortable experience, that the doctrine of persecution is far from being an article of our faith.

It is not for any private man to censure the proceedings of a foreign prince; but, without suspicion of flattery, I may praise our own, who has taken contrary measures, and those more suitable to the spirit of Christianity. Some of the Dissenters, in their addresses to his Majesty, have said,—‘That he has restored God to his empire over conscience.’ I confess I dare not stretch the figure to so great a boldness; but I may safely say, that conscience is the royalty and prerogative of every private man. He is absolute in his own breast, and accountable to no earthly power for that which passes only betwixt God and him. Those who are driven into the fold are, generally speaking, rather made hypocrites than converts.

This indulgence being granted to all the Sects, it ought in reason to be expected that they should both receive it, and receive it thankfully. For, at this time of day, to refuse the benefit, and adhere to those whom they have esteemed their persecutors, what is it else but publicly to own that they suffered not before for conscience’ sake, but only out of pride and obstinacy, to separate from a church for those impositions which they now judge may be lawfully obeyed? After they have so long contended for their classical ordination (not to speak of rites and ceremonies), will they at length submit to an episcopal? If they can go so far out of complaisance to their old enemies, methinks a little reason should persuade them to take another step, and see whither that would lead them.

Of the receiving this toleration thankfully I shall say no more, than that they ought, and I doubt not they will, consider from what hand they received it. It is not from a Cyrus, a heathen prince, and a foreigner, but from a Christian king, their native sovereign, who expects a return in specie from them, that the kindness which he has graciously shown them may be retaliated on those of his own persuasion.

As for the poem in general, I will only thus far satisfy the reader, that it was neither imposed on me, nor so much as the subject given me by any man. It was written during the last winter, and the beginning of this spring; though with long interruptions of ill health and other hindrances. About a fortnight before I had finished it, his Majesty’s declaration for liberty of

conscience came abroad: which, if I had so soon expected, I might have spared myself the labour of writing many things which are contained in the third part of it. But I was always in some hope, that the Church of England might have been persuaded to have taken off the Penal Laws and the Test, which was one design of the poem when I proposed to myself the writing of it.

It is evident that some part of it was only occasional, and not first intended: I mean that defence of myself, to which every honest man is bound, when he is injuriously attacked in print: and I refer myself to the judgment of those who have read the Answer to the Defence of the late King's Paper, and that of the Duchess (in which last I was concerned), how charitably I have been represented there. I am now informed both of the author and supervisors of this pamphlet, and will reply, when I think he can affront me: for I am of Socrates' opinion, that all creatures cannot. In the meantime let him consider whether he deserved not a more severe reprehension than I gave him formerly, for using so little respect to the memory of those whom he pretended to answer; and at his leisure look out for some original treatise of humility, written by any Protestant in English; I believe I may say in any other tongue: for the magnified piece of Duncomb on that subject, which either he must mean or none, and with which another of his fellows has upbraided me, was translated from the Spanish of Rodriguez; though with the omission of the seventeenth, the twenty-fourth, the twenty-fifth, and the last chapter, which will be found in comparing of the books.

He would have insinuated to the world, that her late Highness died not a Roman Catholic. He declares himself to be now satisfied to the contrary, in which he has given up the cause: for matter of fact was the principal debate betwixt us. In the meantime, he would dispute the motives of her change; how preposterously, let all men judge, when he seemed to deny the subject of the controversy, the change itself. And because I would not take up this ridiculous challenge, he tells the world I cannot argue: but he may as well infer, that a Catholic cannot fast, because he will not take up the cudgels against Mrs. James, to confute the Protestant religion.

I have but one word more to say concerning the poem as such, and abstracting from the matters, either religious or civil, which are handled in it. The first part, consisting most in general characters and narration, I have endeavoured to raise, and give it the majestic turn of heroic poesy. The second being matter of dispute, and chiefly concerning Church Authority, I was obliged to

make as plain and perspicuous as possibly I could; yet not wholly neglecting the numbers, though I had not frequent occasions for the magnificence of verse. The third, which has more of the nature of domestic conversation, is, or ought to be, more free and familiar than the two former.

There are in it two Episodes, or Fables, which are interwoven with the main design; so that they are properly parts of it, though they are also distinct stories of themselves. In both of these I have made use of the commonplaces of Satire, whether true or false, which are urged by the members of the one Church against the other; at which I hope no reader of either party will be scandalized, because they are not of my invention, but as old, to my knowledge, as the times of Boccace and Chaucer on the one side, and as those of the Reformation on the other.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

PART THE FIRST.

— Antiquam exquirite matrem.
Et vera, incesso, patuit Dea.—VING.

A MILK-WHITE Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged;
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts; and many winged wounds
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doomed to death though fated not to die.*

* 'Faith, Mr. Bayes, if you were *doomed* to be hanged, whatever you were *fated* to 'twould give you but small comfort.'—*Country and City Mouse*. This was one of the points on which Dryden was attacked. His critics insisted that *doomed* and *fated* meant the same thing. The use of the words, and the controversy it occasioned, are equally loose. 'In the text,' observes Sir Walter Scott, 'it is obvious that the doom, or sentence, of an earthly tribunal is placed in opposition to the decree of Providence.' This is obvious enough. As there are other words, however, that would have more palpably expressed this opposition, the defence is unsatisfactory. Doom, in *one* sense, means judgment, and does not necessarily imply the fulfilment of the judgment; but it

Not so her young; for their unequal line
Was hero's make, half human, half divine.
Their earthly mould obnoxious was to fate,
The immortal part assumed immortal state.
Of these a slaughtered army lay in blood,
Extended o'er the Caledonian wood,
Their native walk; whose vocal blood arose,
And cried for pardon on their perjured foes.
Their fate was fruitful, and the sanguine seed,
Endued with souls, increased the sacred breed.
So captive Israel multiplied in chains,
A numerous exile, and enjoyed her pains.
With grief and gladness mixed, the mother viewed
Her martyred offspring, and their race renewed;
Their corpse to perish, but their kind to last,
So much the deathless plant the dying fruit surpassed.

Panting and pensive now she ranged alone,
And wandered in the kingdoms once her own.
The common hunt, though from their rage restrained
By sovereign power, her company disdained;
Grinned as they passed, and with a glaring eye
Gave gloomy signs of secret enmity.
'Tis true she bounded by, and tripped so light,
They had not time to take a steady sight;
For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen.

The bloody Bear, an independent beast,
Unlicked to form, in groans her hate expressed.
Among the timorous kind, the quaking Hare
Professed neutrality, but would not swear.
Next her the buffoon Ape, as atheists use,
Mimicked all sects, and had his own to choose;

also means judgment carried into execution. In the former case, doom and fate are not synonymous; in the latter (the popular acceptation) they are. Dryden may, probably, have employed the word designedly to produce a startling antithesis; but a phrase that requires so much explanation might have been exchanged with advantage for one more simple and direct.

Still when the Lion looked, his knees he bent,
And paid at church a courtier's compliment.
The bristled Baptist Boar, impure as he,
But whitened with the foam of sanctity,
With fat pollutions filled the sacred place,
And mountains levelled in his furious race;
So first rebellion founded was in grace.
But since the mighty ravage which he made
In German forests, had his guilt betrayed,
With broken tusks, and with a borrowed name,
He shunned the vengeance, and concealed the shame;
So lurked in sects unseen. With greater guile
False Reynard fed on consecrated spoil;
The graceless beast by Athanasius first
Was chased from Nice; then by Socinus nursed;
His impious race their blasphemy renewed,
And nature's king through nature's optics viewed
Reversed they viewed him lessened to their eye,
Nor in an infant could a God descry;
New swarming sects to this obliquely tend,
Hence they began, and here they all will end.
What weight of ancient witness can prevail,
If private reason hold the public scale?
But, gracious God, how well dost thou provide
For erring judgments an unerring guide!
Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight,
Oh, teach me to believe thee thus concealed,
And search no farther than thyself revealed;
But her alone for my director take,
Whom thou hast promised never to forsake!
My thoughtless youth was winged with vain desires;
My manhood, long misled by wandering fires,
Followed false lights; and when their glimpse was gone,
My pride struck out new sparkles of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am;
Be thine the glory, and be mine the shame!

Good life be now my task ; my doubts are done ;
 What more could fright my faith, than three in one ?*
 Can I believe eternal God could lie
 Disguised in mortal mould and infancy ?
 That the great Maker of the world could die ?
 And, after that, trust my imperfect sense,
 Which calls in question His Omnipotence ?
 Can I my reason to my faith compel,
 And shall my sight, and touch, and taste rebel ?
 Superior faculties are set aside ;
 Shall their subservient organs be my guide ?
 Then let the moon usurp the rule of day,
 And winking tapers show the sun his way ;
 For what my senses can themselves perceive,
 I need no revelation to believe.
 Can they who say the Host should be descried
 By sense, define a body glorified ?
 Impassable, and penetrating parts ?
 Let them declare by what mysterious arts
 He shot that body through the opposing might
 Of bolts and bars impervious to the light,
 And stood before his train confessed in open sight.

* Believing in the Trinity, Dryden argues that faith is deprived of the right of refusing assent to such doctrines as that of transubstantiation. But this line of argument had been long before disposed of. The distinction drawn by Protestant theologians, between things *above* our reason, and things *contrary* to it, is clear and unexceptionable as a logical statement. The attempt to reconcile us to physical impossibilities by examples drawn from spiritual mysteries, must therefore always fail for want of analogy. I use the expression 'physical impossibilities' in our human sense of it ; for God's power over matter is not involved in the discussion. Dryden's reasoning in this passage is uncandid. We do not compel our reason to submit to faith in the doctrine of the Trinity. There is no compulsion in the case. It does not come within the province of reason. As to the rejection of miracles which contradict the laws of nature, we may fairly appeal from Dryden Hind to Dryden Panther.

' The doctrine, miracles ; which must convince,
 For heaven in them appeals to human sense ;
 And, though they prove not, they confirm the cause,
 When what is taught agrees with nature's laws.'

Religio Laici.

For since thus wondrously he passed, 'tis plain
 One single place two bodies did contain,
 And sure the same Omnipotence as well
 Can make one body in more places dwell.
 Let reason then at her own quarry fly,
 But how can finite grasp infinity?

'Tis urged again, that faith did first commence
 By miracles, which are appeals to sense,
 And thence concluded, that our sense must be
 The motive still of credibility.
 For latter ages must on former wait,
 And what began belief, must propagate.

But winnow well this thought, and you shall find
 'Tis light as chaff that flies before the wind.
 Were all those wonders wrought by power divine,
 As means or ends of some more deep design?
 Most sure as means, whose end was this alone,
 To prove the Godhead of the Eternal Son.*
 God thus asserted, man is to believe
 Beyond what sense and reason can conceive,
 And, for mysterious things of faith, rely
 On the proponent, Heaven's authority.
 If, then, our faith we for our guide admit,
 Vain is the farther search of human wit;
 As when the building gains a surer stay,
 We take the unuseful scaffolding away.
 Reason by sense no more can understand;
 The game is played into another hand.
 Why choose we then like bilander† to creep
 Along the coast, and land in view to keep,
 When safely we may launch into the deep?

* This is sound Protestant doctrine. The first miracles were designed to manifest to the world the divinity of the Saviour. That end accomplished, the necessity for them ceased. The very grounds upon which we are here required to believe in the miracles of that age, justifies disbelief in the miracles of all subsequent ages. In the eagerness to vindicate the article of transubstantiation, Dryden proves too much.

† Bilander (By-land-er) an old word for a boat used in coast navigation.—SCOTT.

In the same vessel which our Saviour bore,
Himself the pilot, let us leave the shore,
And with a better guide a better world explore.
Could he his Godhead veil with flesh and blood,
And not veil these again to be our food?
His grace in both is equal in extent;
The first affords us life, the second nourishment.
And if he can, why all this frantic pain
To construe what his clearest words contain,
And make a riddle what he made so plain?
To take up half on trust, and half to try,
Name it not faith, but bungling bigotry.
Both knave and fool the merchant we may call,
To pay great sums, and to compound the small;
For who would break with Heaven, and would not
break for all?

Rest then, my soul, from endless anguish freed:
Nor sciences thy guide, nor sense thy creed.
Faith is the best insurer of thy bliss;
The bank above must fail before the venture miss.

But Heaven and heaven-born faith are far from thee,
Thou first apostate to divinity.
Unkennelled range in thy Polonian plains;
A fiercer foe the insatiate Wolf remains.
Too boastful Britain, please thyself no more,
That beasts of prey are banished from thy shore;
The Bear, the Boar, and every savage name,
Wild in effect, though in appearance tame,
Lay waste thy woods, destroy thy blissful bower,
And, muzzled though they seem, the mutes devour.
More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race
Appear with belly gaunt, and famished face;
Never was so deformed a beast of grace.
His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,
Close clapped for shame; but his rough crest he rears,
And pricks up his predestinating ears.*

* In Cromwell's time, the Presbyterians wore their hair closely cropped, and black caps that left their ears bare.

His wild disordered walk, his haggard eyes,
Did all the bestial citizens surprise;
Though feared and hated, yet he ruled awhile,
As captain or companion of the spoil.
Full many a year his hateful head had been
For tribute paid, nor since in Cambria seen;
The last of all the litter 'scaped by chance,
And from Geneva first infested France.
Some authors thus his pedigree will trace,
But others write him of an upstart race;
Because of Wickliff's brood no mark he brings,
But his innate antipathy to kings.
These last deduce him from the Helvetian kind,
Who near the Lemanlake his consort lined:
That fiery Zuinglius first the affection bred,
And meagre Calvin blessed the nuptial bed.
In Israel some believe him whelped long since,
When the proud Sanhedrim oppressed the prince,
Or, since he will be Jew, derive him higher,
When Corah with his brethren did conspire
From Moses' hand the sovereign sway to wrest,
And Aaron of his ephod to divest;
'Till opening earth made way for all to pass,
And could not bear the burden of a class.
The Fox and he came shuffled in the dark,
If ever they were stowed in Noah's ark;
Perhaps not made; for all their barking train
The Dog (a common species) will contain;
And some wild curs, who from their master ran,
Abhorring the supremacy of man,
In woods and caves the rebel race began.

O happy pair, how well have you increased!
What ills in Church and State have you redressed!
With teeth untried, and rudiments of claws,
Your first essay was on your native laws:
Those having torn with ease, and trampled down,
Your fangs you fastened on the mitred-crown,
And freed from God and monarchy your town.

What though your native kennel still be small,
Bounded betwixt a puddle and a wall ;*
Yet your victorious colonies are sent
Where the north ocean girds the continent.
Quickened with fire below, your monsters breed
In fenny Holland, and in fruitful Tweed ;
And, like the first, the last affects to be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
As, where in fields the fairy rounds are seen,
A rank sour herbage rises on the green ;
So, springing where those midnight elves advance,
Rebellion prints the footsteps of the dance.
Such are their doctrines, such contempt they show
To Heaven above, and to their prince below,
As none but traitors and blasphemers know.
God, like the tyrant of the skies, is placed,
And kings, like slaves, beneath the crowd debased.
So fulsome is their food, that flocks refuse
To bite, and only dogs for physic use.
As, where the lightning runs along the ground,
No husbandry can heal the blasting wound ;
Nor bladed grass, nor bearded corn succeeds,
But scales of scurf and putrefaction breeds :
Such wars, such waste, such fiery tracks of dearth
Their zeal has left, and such a teemless earth.
But, as the poisons of the deadliest kind
Are to their own unhappy coasts confined ;
As only Indian shades of sight deprive,
And magic plants will but in Colchos thrive ;
So Presbytery and pestilential zeal
Can only flourish in a commonweal.
From Celtic woods is chased the wolfish crew ;
But ah ! some pity e'en to brutes is due :
Their native walks, methinks, they might enjoy,
Curbed of their native malice to destroy.

* The 'kennel' is the picturesque town of Geneva ; and the 'puddle'
its lake

Of all the tyrannies on human kind,
 The worst is that which persecutes the mind.
 Let us but weigh at what offence we strike;
 'Tis but because we cannot think alike.
 In punishing of this, we overthrow
 The laws of nations and of nature too.
 Beasts are the subjects of tyrannic sway,
 Where still the stronger on the weaker prey;
 Man only of a softer mould is made,
 Not for his fellows' ruin, but their aid:
 Created kind, beneficent and free,
 The noble image of the Deity.

One portion of informing fire was given
 To brutes, the inferior family of Heaven:
 The Smith Divine, as with a careless beat,
 Struck out the mute creation at a heat;
 But when arrived at last to human race,
 The Godhead took a deep considering space;
 And, to distinguish man from all the rest,
 Unlocked the sacred treasures of his breast;
 And mercy mixed with reason did impart,
 One to his head, the other to his heart;
 Reason to rule, and mercy to forgive;
 The first is law, the last prerogative.
 And like his mind his outward form appeared,
 When, issuing naked, to the wondering herd,
 He charmed their eyes; and, for they loved, they feared.
 Not armed with horns of arbitrary might,
 Or claws to seize their furry spoils in fight,
 Or with increase of feet to o'ertake them in their
 Of easy shape, and pliant every way, [flight:
 Confessing still the softness of his clay,
 And kind as kings upon their coronation day;
 With open hands, and with extended space
 Of arms, to satisfy a large embrace.
 Thus kneaded up with milk, the new-made man
 His kingdom o'er his kindred world began;

Till knowledge misapplied, misunderstood,
 And pride of empire, soured his balmy blood.
 Then, first rebelling, his own stamp he coins;
 The murderer Cain was latent in his loins;
 And blood began its first and loudest cry,
 For differing worship of the Deity.
 Thus persecution rose, and farther space
 Produced the mighty hunter of his race.
 Not so the blessed Pan his flock increased,
 Content to fold them from the famished beast:
 Mild were his laws; the Sheep and harmless Hind
 Were never of the persecuting kind.
 Such pity now the pious pastor shows,
 Such mercy from the British Lion flows,
 That both provide protection from their foes.

Oh happy regions, Italy and Spain,
 Which never did those monsters entertain!
 The Wolf, the Bear, the Boar, can there advance
 No native claim of just inheritance;
 And self-preserving laws, severe in show,
 May guard their fences from the invading foe.
 Where birth has placed them, let them safely share
 The common benefit of vital air;*
 Themselves unharmed, let them live unharmed;
 Their jaws disabled, and their claws disarmed;
 Here, only in nocturnal howlings bold,
 They dare not seize the Hind, nor leap the fold.
 More powerful, and as vigilant as they,
 The Lion awfully forbids the prey.

* The geographical limits assigned to religious liberty in this remarkable couplet have been latterly revived, but have found little favour in any quarter. The attempt to justify, on the part of the Duke of Tuscany, a course of oppression which, in the same breath, it is asserted would be persecution in England, has received only a hesitating and reluctant response even from the ultra-montane party. The sufferers under these 'self-preserving laws' of happy Italy and Spain, might dispute the accuracy of a description which represents them as being severe merely in show.

Their rage repressed, though pinched with famine sore,
They stand aloof, and tremble at his roar;
Much is their hunger, but their fear is more.

These are the chief; to number o'er the rest,
And stand, like Adám, naming every beast,
Were weary work; nor will the Muse describe
A slimy-born and sun-begotten tribe;
Who, far from steeples and their sacred sound,
In fields their sullen conventicles found.
These gross, half-animated lumps I leave;
Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive.
But if they think at all, 'tis sure no higher
Than matter put in motion may aspire;
Souls that can scarce ferment their mass of clay;
So drossy, so divisible are they,
As would but serve pure bodies for allay;
Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things
As only buzz to heaven with evening wings;
Strike in the dark, offending but by chance,
Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance.
They know not beings, and but hate a name;
To them the Hind and Panther are the same.

The Panther, sure the noblest, next the Hind,
And fairest creature of the spotted kind;
Oh, could her in-born stains be washed away,
She were too good to be a beast of prey!
How can I praise, or blame, and not offend,
Or how divide the frailty from the friend?
Her faults and virtues lie so mixed, that she
Nor wholly stands condemned, nor wholly free.
Then, like her injured Lion, let me speak;
He cannot bend her, and he would not break.
Unkind already, and estranged in part,
The Wolf begins to share her wandering heart.
Though unpolluted yet with actual ill,
She half commits who sins but in her will.
If, as our dreaming Platonists report,
There could be spirits of a middle sort,

Too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell,
Who just dropped half way down, nor lower fell;
So poised, so gently she descends from high,
It seems a soft dismissal from the sky.
Her house not ancient, whatsoe'er pretence
Her clergy heralds make in her defence;
A second century not half-way run,
Since the new honours of her blood begun.
A lion old, obscene, and furious made
By lust, compressed her mother in a shade;
Then, by a left-hand marriage, weds the dame,
Covering adultery with a specious name;
So Schism begot; and Sacrilege and she,
A well matched pair, got graceless Heresy.
God's and kings' rebels have the same good cause
To trample down divine and human laws;
Both would be called reformers, and their hate
Alike destructive both to Church and State.
The fruit proclaims the plant; a lawless prince
By luxury reformed incontinence;
By ruins, charity; by riots, abstinence.
Confessions, fasts, and penance set aside;
Oh, with what ease we follow such a guide,
Where souls are starved, and senses gratified!
Where marriage pleasures midnight prayer supply,
And matin bells, a melancholy cry,
Are tuned to merrier notes, Increase and multiply.
Religion shows a rosy-coloured face;
Not battered out with drudging works of grace:
And down-hill reformation rolls apace.
What flesh and blood would crowd the narrow gate,
Or, 'till they waste their pampered paunches, wait?
All would be happy at the cheapest rate.
Though our lean faith these rigid laws has given,
The full-fed Mussulman goes fat to heaven;
For his Arabian prophet with delights
Of sense allured his eastern proselytes.

The jolly Luther, reading him, began
To interpret Scriptures by his Alcoran;
To grub the thorns beneath our tender feet,
And make the paths of Paradise more sweet,
Bethought him of a wife, ere half way gone,
For 'twas uneasy travelling alone;
And, in this masquerade of mirth and love,
Mistook the bliss of heaven for Bacchanals above.
Sure he presumed of praise, who came to stock
The ethereal pastures with so fair a flock,
Burnished, and battenning on their food, to show
Their diligence of careful herds below.

Our Panther, though like these she changed her
Yet, as the mistress of a monarch's bed, [head,
Her front erect with majesty she bore,
The crosier wielded, and the mitre wore.
Her upper part of decent discipline
Shewed affectation of an ancient line;
And Fathers, Councils, Church and Church's head,
Were on her reverend phylacteries read.
But what disgraced and disavowed the rest,
Was Calvin's brand, that stigmatised the beast.
Thus, like a creature of a double kind,
In her own labyrinth she lives confined;
To foreign lands no sound of her is come,
Humbly content to be despised at home.
Such is her faith, where good cannot be had,
At least she leaves the refuse of the bad:
Nice in her choice of ill, though not of best,
And least deformed, because deformed the least.
In doubtful points betwixt her differing friends,
Where one for substance, one for sign contends,
Their contradicting terms she strives to join;
Sign shall be substance, substance shall be sign.
A real presence all her sons allow,
And yet 'tis flat idolatry to bow,
Because the Godhead's there they know not how.

Her novices are taught that bread and wine
Are but the visible and outward sign,
Received by those who in communion join;
But the inward grace, or the thing signified,
His blood and body, who to save us died,
The faithful this thing signified receive:
What is't those faithful then partake or leave?
For what is signified and understood,
Is, by her own confession, flesh and blood.
Then, by the same acknowledgment, we know
They take the sign, and take the substance too.
The literal sense is hard to flesh and blood,
But nonsense never can be understood.

Her wild belief on every wave is tost;
But sure no Church can better morals boast.
True to her king her principles are found;
Oh, that her practice were but half so sound!
Stedfast in various turns of state she stood,
And sealed her vowed affection with her blood:
Nor will I meanly tax her constancy,
That interest or obligation made the tie,
Bound to the fate of murdered monarchy.
Before the sounding axe so falls the vine,
Whose tender branches round the poplar twine.
She chose her ruin, and resigned her life,
In death undaunted as an Indian wife:
A rare example! but some souls we see
Grow hard, and stiffen with adversity:
Yet these by fortune's favours are undone;
Resolved into a baser form they run,
And bore the wind, but cannot bear the sun.
Let this be nature's frailty, or her fate,
Or Isgrim's counsel, her new-chosen mate;
Still she's the fairest of the fallen crew;
No mother more indulgent, but the true.

Fierce to her foes, yet fears her force to try,
Because she wants innate authority;

For how can she constrain them to obey,
Who has herself cast off the lawful sway?
Rebellion equals all, and those, who toil
In common theft, will share the common spoil.
Let her produce the title and the right,
Against her old superiors first to fight;
If she reform by text, e'en that's as plain
For her own rebels to reform again.
As long as words a different sense will bear,
And each may be his own interpreter,
Our airy faith will no foundation find:
The word's a weathercock for every wind:
The Bear, the Fox, the Wolf, by turns prevail;
The most in power supplies the present gale.
The wretched Panther cries aloud for aid
To Church and Councils, whom she first betrayed;
No help from Fathers or Tradition's train:
Those ancient guides she taught us to disdain,
And by that Scripture, which she once abused
To reformation, stands herself accused.
What bills for breach of laws can she prefer,
Expounding which she owns herself may err?
And, after all her winding ways are tried,
If doubts arise, she slips herself aside,
And leaves the private conscience for the guide.
If, then, that conscience set the offender free,
It bars her claim to Church authority.
How can she censure, or what crime pretend,
But Scripture may be construed to defend?
Even those, whom for rebellion she transmits
To civil power, her doctrine first acquits;
Because no disobedience can ensue,
Where no submission to a judge is due;
Each judging for himself, by her consent,
Whom, thus absolved, she sends to punishment
Suppose the magistrate revenge her cause,
"Tis only for transgressing human laws.

How answering to its end a Church is made,
Whose power is but to counsel and persuade?
Oh solid rock, on which secure she stands!
Eternal house, not built with mortal hands!
Oh sure defence against the infernal gate,
A patent during pleasure of the state!

Thus is the Panther neither loved nor feared,
A mere mock queen of a divided herd;
Whom soon by lawful power she might control,
Herself a part submitted to the whole.
Then, as the moon who first receives the light
By which she makes our nether regions bright,
So might she shine, reflecting from afar
The rays she borrowed from a better star;
Big with the beams, which from her mother flow,
And reigning o'er the rising tides below:
Now, mixing with a savage crowd, she goes,
And meanly flatters her inveterate foes;
Ruled while she rules, and losing every hour
Her wretched remnants of precarious power.

One evening, while the cooler shade she sought,
Revolving many a melancholy thought,
Alone she walked, and looked around in vain,
With rueful visage, for her vanished train:
None of her silvan subjects made their court;
Levées and couchées passed without resort.
So hardly can usurpers manage well
Those whom they first instructed to rebel.
More liberty begets desire for more;
The hunger still increases with the store.
Without respect they brushed along the wood,
Each in his clan, and, filled with loathsome food,
Asked no permission to the neighb'ring flood.
The Panther, full of inward discontent,
Since they would go, before them wisely went;
Supplying want of power by drinking first,
As if she gave them leave to quench their thirst.

Among the rest, the Hind, with fearful face,
Beheld from far the common watering-place,
Nor durst approach; till with an awful roar
The sovereign Lion bad her fear no more.
Encouraged thus, she brought her younglings nigh,
Watching the motions of her patron's eye,
And drank a sober draught; the rest amazed
Stood mutely still, and on the stranger gazed;
Surveyed her part by part, and sought to find
The ten-horned monster in the harmless Hind,
Such as the Wolf and Panther had designed.
They thought at first they dreamed; for 'twas offence
With them to question certitude of sense,
Their guide in faith: but nearer when they drew,
And had the faultless object full in view,
Lord, how they all admired her heavenly hue!
Some, who before her fellowship disdained,
Scarce, and but scarce, from in-born rage restrained,
Now frisked about her, and old kindred feigned.
Whether for love or interest, every sect
Of all the savage nation showed respect.
The viceroy Panther could not awe the herd;
The more the company, the less they feared.
The surly Wolf with secret envy burst,
Yet could not howl; (the Hind had seen him first;)
But what he durst not speak, the Panther durst.

For when the herd, sufficed, did late repair
To ferny heaths, and to their forest lair,
She made a mannerly excuse to stay,
Proffering the Hind to wait her half the way;
That, since the sky was clear, an hour of talk
Might help her to beguile the tedious walk.
With much good-will the motion was embraced,
To chat awhile on their adventures passed;
Nor had the grateful Hind so soon forgot
Her friend and fellow-sufferer in the plot.
Yet wondering how of late she grew estranged,
Her forehead cloudy, and her countenance changed,

She thought this hour the occasion would present,
To learn her secret cause of discontent,
Which well she hoped might be with ease redressed,
Considering her a well-bred civil beast,
And more a gentlewoman than the rest.
After some common talk what rumours ran,
The lady of the spotted muff began.

PART THE SECOND.

‘DAME,’ said the Panther, ‘times are mended well,
Since late among the Philistines you fell.
The toils were pitched, a spacious tract of ground
With expert huntsmen was encompassed round;
The inclosure narrowed; the sagacious power
Of hounds and death drew nearer every hour.
’Tis true, the younger Lion ’scaped the snare,
But all your priestly calves lay struggling there,
As sacrifices on their altars laid;
While you, their careful mother, wisely fled,
Not trusting destiny to save your head.
For, whate’er promises you have applied
To your unfailing Church, the surer side
Is four fair legs in danger to provide;
And whate’er tales of Peter’s chair you tell,
Yet, saving reverence of the miracle,
The better luck was yours to ’scape so well.’

‘As I remember,’ said the sober Hind,
‘Those toils were for your own dear self designed,
As well as me; and with the self-same throw,
To catch the quarry and the vermin too,—
Forgive the slanderous tongues that called you so.
Howe’er you take it now, the common cry
Then ran you down for your rank royalty.
Besides, in Popery they thought you nurst,
As evil tongues will ever speak the worst,

Because some forms, and ceremonies some
You kept, and stood in the main question dumb.
Dumb you were born indeed; but thinking long,
The Test, it seems, at last has loosed your tongue.
And to explain what your forefathers meant
By real presence in the sacrament,
After long fencing pushed against a wall,
Your salvo comes, that he's not there at all: [fall.
There changed your faith, and what may change may
Who can believe what varies every day,
Nor ever was, nor will be at a stay?'

'Tortures may force the tongue untruths to tell,
And I ne'er owned myself infallible,'
Replied the Panther: 'grant such presence were,
Yet in your sense I never owned it there.
A real virtue we by faith receive,
And that we in the sacrament believe.'

'Then,' said the Hind, 'as you the matter state,
Not only Jesuits can equivocate;
For real, as you now the word expound,
From solid substance dwindles to a sound.
Methinks an *Æsop's* fable you repeat;
You know who took the shadow for the meat:
Your Church's substance thus you change at will,
And yet retain your former figure still.
I freely grant you spoke to save your life;
For then you lay beneath the butcher's knife.
Long time you fought, redoubled battery bore,
But, after all, against yourself you swore;
Your former self: for every hour your form
Is chopped and changed, like winds before a storm.
Thus fear and interest will prevail with some;
For all have not the gift of martyrdom.'

The Panther grinned at this, and thus replied:
'That men may err was never yet denied.
But, if that common principle be true,
The canon, dame, is levelled full at you.

But, shunning long disputes, I fain would see
That wondrous wight, Infallibility.
Is he from Heaven, this mighty champion, come?
Or lodged below in subterranean Rome?
First, seat him somewhere, and derive his race,
Or else conclude that nothing has no place.'

'Suppose, (though I disown it,)' said the Hind,
'The certain mansion were not yet assigned:
The doubtful residence no proof can bring
Against the plain existence of the thing.
Because philosophers may disagree,
If sight by emission or reception be,
Shall it be thence inferred I do not see?
But you require an answer positive,
Which yet, when I demand, you dare not give;
For fallacies in universals live.

I then affirm, that this unfailing guide
In Pope and General Councils must reside;
Both lawful, both combined; what one decrees
By numerous votes, the other ratifies;
On this undoubted sense the Church relies.
'Tis true, some doctors in a scantier space,
I mean, in each apart, contract the place.
Some, who to greater length extend the line,
The Church's after-acceptation join.
This last circumference appears too wide;
The Church diffused is by the Council tied;
As members, by their representatives,
Obliged to laws, which Prince and Senate gives.
Thus some contract and some enlarge the space;
In Pope and Council, who denies the place,
Assisted from above with God's unfailing grace?
Those canons all the needful points contain;
Their sense so obvious, and their words so plain,
That no disputes about the doubtful text
Have hitherto the labouring world perplexed.
If any should in after-times appear, [clear;
New Councils must be called, to make the meaning

Because in them the power supreme resides,*
 And all the promises are to the guides.
 This may be taught with sound and safe defence,
 But mark how sandy is your own pretence,
 Who, setting Councils, Pope, and Church aside,
 Are every man his own presuming guide.
 The Sacred Books, you say, are full and plain,
 And every needful point of truth contain;†
 All, who can read, interpreters may be.
 Thus, though your several Churches disagree,
 Yet every saint has to himself alone
 The secret of this philosophic stone.
 These principles your jarring sects unite,
 When differing doctors and disciples fight.
 Though Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, holy chiefs,
 Have made a battle-royal of beliefs;
 Or, like wild horses, several ways have whirled
 The tortured text about the Christian world,
 Each Jehu lashing on with furious force,
 That Turk or Jew could not have used it worse;
 No matter what dissension leaders make,
 Where every private man may save a stake:

* The right of interpretation thus peremptorily claimed, Dryden had before as peremptorily denied:

The partial Papists would infer from hence
 Their Church, in last resort, should judge the sense;
 But first they would assume, with wondrous art,
 Themselves to be the whole, who are but part
 Of that vast frame, the Church; yet grant they were
 The handers down, can they from thence infer
 The right to interpret? * *
 The Book's a common largess to mankind * *
 The carrier's not commissioned to expound.—*Religio Laici.*

† This was exactly what Dryden himself had said of the 'Sacred Book:'

It speaks itself, and what it does contain,
 In all things needful to be known, is plain.

And that the Scriptures, though not everywhere free from corruption,
 or entire, or clear,

*Are uncorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,
 In all things which our needful faith require.—Religio Laici.*

Ruled by the Scripture and his own advice,
Each has a blind by-path to Paradise ;
Where, driving in a circle, slow or fast,
Opposing sects are sure to meet at last.
A wondrous charity you have in store
For all reformed to pass the narrow door ;
So much, that Mahomet had scarcely more.
For he, kind prophet, was for damning none ;
But Christ and Moses were to save their own :
Himself was to secure his chosen race,
Though reason good for Turks to take the place,
And he allowed to be the better man,
In virtue of his holier Alcoran.'

'True,' said the Panther, 'I shall ne'er deny
My brethren may be saved as well as I :
Though Huguenots condemn our ordination,
Succession, ministerial vocation ;
And Luther, more mistaking what he read,
Misjoins the sacred body with the bread :
Yet, lady, still remember, I maintain
The Word, in needful points, is only plain.'

'Needless, or needful, I not now contend,
For still you have a loophole for a friend,'
Rejoined the matron ; 'but the rule you lay
Has led whole flocks, and leads them still astray,
In weighty points, and full damnation's way.
For, did not Arius first, Socinus now,
The Son's eternal Godhead disavow ?
And did not these, by gospel texts alone,
Condemn our doctrine, and maintain their own ?
Have not all heretics the same pretence,
To plead the Scriptures in their own defence ?
How did the Nicene Council then decide
That strong debate ? was it by Scripture tried ?
No, sure ; to that the rebel would not yield ;
Squadrons of texts he marshalled in the field :
That was but civil war, an equal set,
Where piles with piles, and eagles eagles met.

With texts point-blank and plain he faced the foe;
 And did not Satan tempt our Saviour so?
 The good old bishops took a simpler way;
 Each asked but what he heard his father say,
 Or how he was instructed in his youth,
 And by Tradition's force upheld the truth.' [she.

The Panther smiled at this:—'And when,' said
 'Were those first Councils disallowed by me?
 Or where did I at sure Tradition strike,
 Provided still it were Apostolic?' [ground,

'Friend,' said the Hind, 'you quit your former
 Where all your faith you did on Scripture found:
 Now, 'tis Tradition joined with Holy Writ;
 But thus your memory betrays your wit.'

'No,' said the Panther; 'for in that I view,
 When your Tradition's forged, and when 'tis true.
 I set them by the rule, and, as they square,
 Or deviate from undoubted doctrine there,
 This, oral fiction, that, old faith declare.' [course;

HIND. 'The Council steered, it seems, a different
 They tried the Scripture by Tradition's force;
 But you Tradition by the Scripture try;
 Pursued by sects, from this to that you fly,
 Nor dare on one foundation to rely.

The Word is then deposed, and, in this view,
 You rule the Scripture, not the Scripture you.'
 Thus said the dame, and, smiling, thus pursued:

'I see, Tradition, then, is disallowed,
 When not evinced by Scripture to be true,
 And Scripture as interpreted by you.
 But here you read upon unfaithful ground,
 Unless you could infallibly expound;
 Which you reject as odious Popery,
 And throw that doctrine back with scorn on me.
 Suppose we on things traditive divide,
 And both appeal to Scripture to decide;
 By various texts we both uphold our claim,
 Nay, often ground our titles on the same:

After long labour lost, and time's expense,
 Both grant the words, and quarrel for the sense.
 Thus all disputes for ever must depend ;
 For no dumb rule can controversies end.
 Thus, when you said,—Tradition must be tried
 By Sacred Writ, whose sense yourselves decide,
 You said no more, but that yourselves must be
 The judges of the Scripture sense, not we.
 Against our Church-tradition you declare,
 And yet your clerks would sit in Moses' chair ;
 At least 'tis proved against your argument,
 The rule is far from plain, where all dissent.'

'If not by Scriptures, how can we be sure,'
 Replied the Panther, 'what tradition's pure?
 For you may palm upon us new for old ;
 All, as they say, that glitters, is not gold.'

'How but by following her,' replied the dame,
 'To whom derived from sire to son they came ;
 Where every age does on another move,
 And trusts no farther than the next above ;
 Where all the rounds like Jacob's ladder rise,
 The lowest hid in earth, the topmost in the skies'

Sternly the savage did her answer mark,
 Her glowing eye-balls glittering in the dark,
 And said but this:—'Since lucre was your trade,
 Succeeding times such dreadful gaps have made,
 'Tis dangerous climbing: To your sons and you
 I leave the ladder, and its omen too.'

HIND. 'The Panther's breath was ever famed for
 But from the Wolf such wishes oft I meet: [sweet;
 You learned this language from the Blatant Beast,
 Or rather did not speak, but were possessed.
 As for your answer, 'tis but barely urged:
 You must evince Tradition to be forged ;
 Produce plain proofs; unblemished authors use,
 As ancient as those ages they accuse ;
 Till when, 'tis not sufficient to defame ;
 An old possession stands, till elder quits the claim.

Then for our interest, which is named alone
To load with envy, we retort your own;
For, when traditions in your faces fly,
Resolving not to yield, you must decry.
As when the cause goes hard, the guilty man
Excepts, and thins his jury all he can;
So when you stand of other aid bereft,
You to the Twelve Apostles would be left.
Your friend the Wolf did with more craft provide
To set those toys, traditions, quite aside;
And Fathers too, unless when, reason spent,
He cites them but sometimes for ornament.
But, madam Panther, you, though more sincere,
Are not so wise as your adulterer;
The private spirit is a better blind,
Than all the dodging tricks your authors find.
For they, who left the Scripture to the crowd,
Each for his own peculiar judge allowed;
The way to please them was to make them proud.
Thus, with full sails, they ran upon the shelf;
Who could suspect a cozenage from himself?
On his own reason safer 'tis to stand,
Than be deceived and damned at second-hand.
But you, who Fathers and traditions take,
And garble some, and some you quite forsake,
Pretending Church authority to fix,
And yet some grains of private spirit mix,
Are, like a mule, made up of differing seed,
And that's the reason why you never breed;
At least, not propagate your kind abroad,
For home-dissenters are by statutes awed.
And yet they grow upon you every day,
While you, to speak the best, are at a stay,
For sects, that are extremes, abhor a middle way.
Like tricks of state, to stop a raging flood,
Or mollify a mad-brained senate's mood:
Of all expedients never one was good.
Well may they argue, nor can you deny,
If we must fix on Church-authority,

Best on the best, the fountain, not the flood ;
 That must be better still, if this be good.
 Shall she command, who has herself rebelled ?
 Is Antichrist by Antichrist expelled ?
 Did we a lawful tyranny displace,
 To set aloft a bastard of the race ?
 Why all these wars to win the Book, if we
 Must not interpret for ourselves, but she ?
 Either be wholly slaves, or wholly free.
 For purging fires traditions must not fight ;
 But they must prove episcopacy's right.
 Thus, those led horses are from service freed ;
 You never mount them but in time of need.
 Like mercenaries, hired for home defence,
 They will not serve against their native prince.
 Against domestic foes of hierarchy
 These are drawn forth, to make fanatics fly ;
 But, when they see their countrymen at hand,
 Marching against them under Church command,
 Straight they forsake their colours, and disband.'

Thus she ; nor could the Panther well enlarge
 With weak defence against so strong a charge ;
 But said :—' For what did Christ his word provide,
 If still his Church must want a living guide ?
 And if all saving doctrines are not there,
 Or sacred penmen could not make them clear,
 From after-ages we should hope in vain
 For truths, which men inspired could not explain.'

' Before the word was written,' said the Hind,
 ' Our Saviour preached his faith to human kind :
 From his Apostles the first age received
 Eternal truth, and what they taught believed.
 Thus by Tradition faith was planted first ; *
 Succeeding flocks succeeding pastors nursed.

* The backward voice proclaims that tradition is to be accepted in evidence only, and not as a rule of faith:

Thus first traditions were a proof alone.

Religio Laici.

This was the way our wise Redeemer chose,
 Who sure could all things for the best dispose,
 To fence his fold from their encroaching foes.
 He could have writ himself, but well foresaw
 The event would be like that of Moses' law;
 Some difference would arise, some doubts remain,
 Like those which yet the jarring Jews maintain.
 No written laws can be so plain, so pure,
 But wit may gloss, and malice may obscure;
 Not those indited by his first command,
 A prophet graved the text, an angel held his hand.
 Thus faith was ere the written word appeared,
 And men believed, not what they read, but heard.*
 But since the Apostles could not be confined
 To these, or those, but severally designed
 Their large commission round the world to blow,
 To spread their faith, they spread their labours too.
 Yet still their absent flock their pains did share;
 They hearkened still, for love produces care.
 And, as mistakes arose, or discords fell,
 Or bold seducers taught them to rebel,
 As charity grew cold, or faction hot,
 Or long neglect their lessons had forgot,
 For all their wants they wisely did provide,
 And preaching by epistles was supplied:
 So, great physicians cannot all attend,
 But some they visit, and to some they send.
 Yet all those letters were not writ to all;
 Nor first intended but occasional,

* The backward voice has no hesitation in pronouncing oral traditions to be more liable to corruption in their descent than written traditions:

If written words from time are not secured,
 How can we think have oral sounds endured?
 Which, thus transmitted, if one mouth has failed,
 Immortal lies on ages are entailed.
*Tradition written, therefore, more commends
 Authority, than what from voice descends.*

Religio Laici.

Their absent sermons; nor, if they contain
 All needful doctrines, are those doctrines plain.
 Clearness by frequent preaching must be wrought;
 They writ but seldom, but they daily taught;
 And what one saint has said of holy Paul,
 'He darkly writ,' is true applied to all.
 For this obscurity could Heaven provide
 More prudently than by a living guide,
 As doubts arose, the difference to decide?
 A guide was therefore needful, therefore made;
 And, if appointed, sure to be obeyed.
 Thus, with due reverence to the Apostles' writ,
 By which my sons are taught, to which submit,
 I think those truths their sacred works contain,
 The Church alone can certainly explain;
 That following ages, leaning on the past,
 May rest upon the primitive at last.
 Nor would I thence the Word no rule infer,
 But none without the Church-interpreter;
 Because, as I have urged before, 'tis mute,
 And is itself the subject of dispute.
 But what the Apostles their successors taught,
 They to the next, from them to us is brought,
 The undoubted sense which is in Scripture sought.
 From hence the Church is armed, when errors rise
 To stop their entrance, and prevent surprise;
 And, safe entrenched within, her foes without defies.
 By these all-festerling sores her councils heal,
 Which time or has disclosed, or shall reveal;
 For discord cannot end without a last appeal.*

* The Church had been previously stated, historically, to have turned its court of appellate jurisdiction over the Scriptures, in 'times of ignorance,' into a 'gainful trade.'

'Then mighty Church did mightily prevail;
 She parcelled out the Bible by retail;
 But still expounded what she sold, or gave,
 To keep it in her power to damu or save.'

Religio Laici.

Nor can a council national decide,
 But with subordination to her guide:
 (I wish the cause were on that issue tried;)
 Much less the Scripture; for suppose debate
 Betwixt pretenders to a fair estate,
 Bequeathed by some legator's last intent;
 (Such is our dying Saviour's testament:)
 The will is proved, is opened, and is read;
 The doubtful heirs their differing titles plead;
 All vouch the words their interest to maintain,
 And each pretends by those his cause is plain.
 Shall then the Testament award the right?
 No, that's the Hungary for which they fight,
 The field of battle, subject of debate;
 The thing contended for, the fair estate.
 The sense is intricate, 'tis only clear
 What vowels and what consonants are there.
 Therefore 'tis plain, its meaning must be tried
 Before some judge appointed to decide.*

'Suppose,' the fair apostate said, 'I grant,
 The faithful flock some living guide should want,
 Your arguments an endless chase pursue:
 Produce this vaunted leader to our view,
 This mighty Moses of the chosen crew.'

The dame, who saw her fainting foe retired,
 With force renewed, to victory aspired;
 And, looking upward to her kindred sky,
 As once our Saviour owned his Deity,
 Pronounced his words—'She whom ye seek am I.'

* It is curious that the backward voice employs precisely the same illustration to show the right of the laity to take the Bible out of the hands of the priests, and assert their own right in it; like heirs who had just discovered the will under which they inherited an estate.

At last, a knowing age 'gan to inquire
 If they [the priests] the Book, or that did them inspire;
 And, making narrower search, they found, though late,
 That what they thought the priests', was their estate;
 Taught by the will produced, the written word,
 How long they had been cheated, on record,' &c.

Religio Laici.

Nor less amazed this voice the Panther heard,
Than were those Jews to hear a God declared.
Then thus the matron modestly renewed:
'Let all your prophets and their sects be viewed,
And see to which of them yourselves think fit
The conduct of your conscience to submit;
Each proselyte would vote his doctor best,
With absolute exclusion to the rest:
Thus would your Polish diet disagree,
And end, as it began, in anarchy;
Yourself the fairest for election stand,
Because you seem crown-general of the land:
But soon against your superstitious lawn
Some Presbyterian sabre would be drawn;
In your established laws of sovereignty
The rest some fundamental flaw would see,
And call rebellion gospel-liberty.
To Church-decrees your articles require
Submission modified, if not entire.
Homage denied, to censures you proceed:
But when Curtana* will not do the deed,
You lay that pointless clergy-weapon by,
And to the laws, your sword of justice, fly.
Now this your sects the more unkindly take,
(Those prying varlets hit the blots you make,)
Because some ancient friends of yours declare,
Your only rule of faith the Scriptures are,
Interpreted by men of judgment sound,
Which every sect will for themselves expound;
Nor think less reverence to their doctors due
For sound interpretation, than to you.
If then, by able heads, are understood
Your brother prophets, who reformed abroad;
Those able heads expound a wiser way,
That their own sheep their shepherd should obey.

* The emblem of mercy; Edward the Confessor's sword without a point.

But if you mean yourselves are only sound,
That doctrine turns the Reformation round,
And all the rest are false reformers found;
Because in sundry points you stand alone,
Not in communion joined with any one;
And therefore must be all the Church, or none.
Then, till you have agreed whose judge is best,
Against this forced submission they protest;
While sound and sound a different sense explains,
Both play at hardhead till they break their brains;
And from their chairs each other's force defy,
While unregarded thunders vainly fly.
I pass the rest, because your Church alone
Of all usurpers best could fill the throne.
But neither you, nor any sect beside,
For this high office can be qualified
With necessary gifts required in such a guide.
For that, which must direct the whole, must be
Bound in one bond of faith and unity;
But all your several Churches disagree.
The consubstantiating church and priest
Refuse communion to the Calvinist;
The French reformed from preaching you restrain,
Because you judge their ordination vain;
And so they judge of yours, but donors must ordain.
In short, in doctrine, or in discipline,
Not one reformed can with another join:
But all from each, as from damnation, fly:
No union they pretend, but in Non-Popery.
Nor, should their members in a synod meet,
Could any Church presume to mount the seat,
Above the rest, their discords to decide;
None would obey, but each would be the guide;
And face to face dissensions would increase;
For only distance now preserves the peace.
All in their turns accusers, and accused,
Babel was never half so much confused.

What one can plead, the rest can plead as well;
 For amongst equals lies no last appeal,
 And all confess themselves are fallible.
 Now, since you grant some necessary guide,
 All who can err are justly laid aside,
 Because a trust so sacred to confer
 Shews want of such a sure interpreter;
 And how can he be needful who can err?
 Then, granting that unerring guide we want,
 That such there is you stand obliged to grant;
 Our Saviour else were wanting to supply
 Our needs, and obviate that necessity.
 It then remains, that Church can only be
 The guide, which owns unfailing certainty;
 Or else you slip your hold, and change your side,
 Relapsing from a necessary guide.
 But this annexed condition of the crown,
 Immunity from errors, you disown; [down.
 Here then you shrink, and lay your weak pretensions
 For petty royalties you raise debate;
 But this unfailing universal state [weight;
 You shun; nor dare succeed to such a glorious
 And for that cause those promises detest,
 With which our Saviour did his Church invest;
 But strive to evade, and fear to find them true,
 As conscious they were never meant to you;
 All which the Mother-Church asserts her own,
 And with unrivalled claim ascends the throne.*

* This is the weakest part of the whole discussion on the side of the Hind; and Dryden had so clear and logical a capacity, that he could not help betraying its weakness. In answer to the demand of the Panther, for a final authority, the Hind replies—

‘She whom you seek am I!’

But this was not what the Panther was inquiring after; for, if the mere assertion of authority were enough, the Panther might assert it as easily as the Hind. It is nothing more than saying that the Church of Rome, maintaining her power by a principle of unity, which prohibits inquiry, and commands implicit obedience, assumes or usurps the ascendancy. The Panther, who appears to be struck dumb at this amazing speech, would assuredly not have been put down by so unsea-

So, when of old the Almighty Father sate,
 In council, to redeem our ruined state,
 Millions of millions, at a distance round,
 Silent the sacred consistory crowned, [pound;
 To hear what mercy, mixed with justice, could pro-
 All prompt, with eager pity, to fulfil
 The full extent of their Creator's will.
 But when the stern conditions were declared,
 A mournful whisper through the host was heard,
 And the whole hierarchy, with heads hung down,
 Submissively declined the ponderous proffered crown.
 Then, not till then, the eternal Son from high
 Rose in the strength of all the Deity;
 Stood forth to accept the terms, and underwent
 A weight which all the frame of heaven had bent,
 Nor he himself could bear, but as Omnipotent.
 Now, to remove the least remaining doubt,
 That even the blear-eyed sects may find her out,
 Behold what heavenly rays adorn her brows,
 What from his wardrobe her beloved allows
 To deck the wedding-day of his unspotted spouse.
 Behold what marks of majesty she brings;
 Richer than ancient heirs of eastern kings!
 Her right hand holds the sceptre and the keys.
 To shew whom she commands, and who obeys:

tisfactory a response; but would have inquired by what right her friend, the Hind, claimed universal empire. Dryden had asked this very question before, and declared—

* Such an omniscient Church we wish indeed;
 'Twere worth both Testaments, cast in the creed.*

But, as no Church could set up a claim to infallibility, he thought it more 'safe and modest' to repose on the Scriptures. As to those differences of opinion, engendered by the free exercise of private judgment, which the Hind treats so contemptuously, their vindication, as matters to be decided by a higher Judge than the Pope, may be found in the following lines:

'If others in the same glass better see,
 'Tis for themselves they look, but not for me;
 For my salvation must its doom receive,
 Not from what others, but what I, believe.'

Religio Laici

With these to bind or set the sinner free,
With that to assert spiritual royalty.

‘One in herself, not rent by schism, but sound,
Entire, one solid shining diamond;
Not sparkles shattered into sects like you:
One is the Church, and must be to be true;
One central principle of unity;
As undivided, so from errors free;
As one in faith, so one in sanctity.
Thus she, and none but she, the insulting rage
Of heretics opposed from age to age;
Still when the giant-brood invades her throne,
She stoops from heaven, and meets them half way down,
And with paternal thunder vindicates her crown.
But like Egyptian sorcerers you stand,
And vainly lift aloft your magic wand,
To sweep away the swarms of vermin from the land;
You could, like them, with like infernal force,
Produce the plague, but not arrest the course.
But when the boils and blotches, with disgrace
And public scandal sat upon the face,
Themselves attacked, the Magi strove no more,
They saw God’s finger, and their fate deplore;
Themselves they could not cure of the dishonest sore.
Thus one, thus pure, behold her largely spread,
Like the fair ocean from her mother-bed;
From east to west triumphantly she rides,
All shores are watered by her wealthy tides.
The gospel’s sound, diffused from pole to pole,
Where winds can carry, and where waves can roll,
The self-same doctrine of the sacred page
Conveyed to every clime, in every age.

‘Here let my sorrow give my satire place,
To raise new blushes on my British race.
Our sailing ships like common sewers we use,
And through our distant colonies diffuse
The draught of dungeons, and the stench of stews,

Whom, when their home-bred honesty is lost,
We disembody on some far Indian coast;
Thieves, pandars, palliards,* sins of every sort;
Those are the manufactures we export,
And these the missionaries our zeal has made;
For, with my country's pardon be it said,
Religion is the least of all our trade.

‘ Yet some improve their traffic more than we;
For they on gain, their only god, rely,
And set a public price on piety.
Industrious of the needle and the chart,
They run full sail to their Japonian mart;
Prevention fear, and, prodigal of fame,
Sell all of Christian to the very name;
Nor leave enough of that to hide their naked shame.
‘ Thus, of three marks, which in the creed we view,
Not one of all can be applied to you;
Much less the fourth. In vain, alas! you seek
The ambitious title of Apostolic:
God-like descent! ’tis well your blood can be
Proved noble in the third or fourth degree;
For all of ancient that you had before,
(I mean what is not borrowed from our store,)
Was error fulminated o’er and o’er;
Old heresies condemned in ages past,
By care and time recovered from the blast.

‘ ’Tis said with ease, but never can be proved,
The Church her old foundations has removed,
And built new doctrines on unstable sands:
Judge that, ye winds and rains! you proved her, yet
she stands.

Those ancient doctrines charged on her for new,
Shew when, and how, and from what hands they grew.

* Palliards was a cant name given to beggars of both sexes who went about in a state of wretchedness and filth, exhibiting fictitious sores, &c., and practising various thefts and impostures.

We claim no power, when heresies grow bold,
To coin new faith, but still declare the old.
How else could that obscene disease be purged,
When controverted texts are vainly urged?
To prove tradition new, there's somewhat more
Required, than saying, 'Twas not used before.
Those monumental arms are never stirred,
Till schism or heresy call down Goliath's sword.

'Thus, what you call corruptions are, in truth,
The first plantations of the gospel's youth;
Old standard faith; but cast your eyes again,
And view those errors which new sects maintain,
Or which of old disturbed the Church's peaceful reign;
And we can point each period of the time,
When they began, and who begot the crime;
Can calculate how long the eclipse endured,
Who interposed, what digits were obscured:
Of all which are already passed away,
We know the rise, the progress, and decay.

'Despair at our foundations then to strike,
Till you can prove your faith Apostolic;
A limpid stream drawn from the native source;
Succession lawful in a lineal course.
Prove any Church, opposed to this our head,
So one, so pure, so unconfinedly spread,
Under one chief of the spiritual state,
The members all combined, and all subordinate.
Shew such a seamless coat, from schism so free,
In no communion joined with heresy.
If such a one you find, let truth prevail;
Till when, your weights will in the balance fail;
A Church unprincipled kicks up the scale.
But if you cannot think (nor sure you can
Suppose in God what were unjust in man)
That He, the fountain of eternal grace,
Should suffer falsehood, for so long a space,
To banish truth, and to usurp her place;

That seven successive ages should be lost,
And preach damnation at their proper cost;
That all your erring ancestors should die,
Drowned in the abyss of deep idolatry;
If piety forbid such thoughts to rise,
Awake, and open your unwilling eyes:
God hath left nothing for each age undone,
From this to that wherein he sent his Son;
Then think but well of Him, and half your work is done.
See how his Church, adorned with every grace,
With open arms, a kind, forgiving face,
Stands ready to prevent her long-lost son's embrace!
Not more did Joseph o'er his brethren weep,
Nor less himself could from discovery keep,
When in the crowd of suppliants they were seen,
And in their crew his best-beloved Benjamin.
That pious Joseph in the Church behold,
To feed your famine, and refuse your gold,
The Joseph you exiled, the Joseph whom you sold.'

Thus, while with heavenly charity she spoke,
A streaming blaze the silent shadows broke;
Shot from the skies a cheerful azure light;
The birds obscene to forests winged their flight,
And gaping graves received the wandering, guilty sprite.

Such were the pleasing triumphs of the sky,
For James's late nocturnal victory;
The pledge of his Almighty Patron's love,
The fireworks which his angels made above.
I saw myself the lambent easy light
Gild the brown horror, and dispel the night:
The messenger with speed the tidings bore;
News, which three labouring nations did restore;
But Heaven's own Nuntius was arrived before.

By this, the Hind had reached her lonely cell,
And vapours rose, and dews unwholesome fell;
When she, by frequent observation wise,
As one who long on heaven had fixed her eyes,
Discerned a change of weather in the skies;

The western borders were with crimson spread,
The moon descending looked all flaming red ;
She thought good manners bound her to invite
The stranger dame to be her guest that night.
'Tis true, coarse diet, and a short repast,
She said, were weak inducements to the taste
Of one so nicely bred, and so unused to fast ;
But what plain fare her cottage could afford,
A hearty welcome at a homely board,
Was freely hers ; and, to supply the rest,
An honest meaning, and an open breast ;
Last, with content of mind, the poor man's wealth,
A grace-cup to their common patron's health.
This she desired her to accept, and stay,
For fear she might be wildered in her way,
Because she wanted an unerring guide,
And then the dew-drops on her silken hide
Her tender constitution did declare,
Too lady-like a long fatigue to bear,
And rough inclemencies of raw nocturnal air.
But most she feared that, travelling so late,
Some evil-minded beasts might lie in wait,
And without witness wreak their hidden hate.

The Panther, though she lent a listening ear,
Had more of lion in her than to fear ;
Yet wisely weighing, since she had to deal
With many foes, their numbers might prevail,
Returned her all the thanks she could afford,
And took her friendly hostess at her word ;
Who, entering first her lowly roof, a shed
With hoary moss and winding ivy spread,
Honest enough to hide an humble hermit's head,
Thus graciously bespoke her welcome guest :
'So might these walls, with your fair presence blest,
Become your dwelling-place of everlasting rest ;
Not for a night, or quick revolving year,
Welcome an owner, not a sojourner.

This peaceful seat my poverty secures;
War seldom enters but where wealth allures:
Nor yet despise it; for this poor abode
Has oft received, and yet receives, a God;
A God, victorious of the Stygian race,
Here laid his sacred limbs, and sanctified the place.
This mean retreat did mighty Pan contain;
Be emulous of him, and pomp disdain,
And dare not to debase your soul to gain.'

The silent stranger stood amazed to see
Contempt of wealth, and wilful poverty:
And, though ill habits are not soon controlled,
A while suspended her desire of gold;
But civilly drew in her sharpened paws,
Not violating hospitable laws,
And pacified her tail, and licked her frothy jaws.

The Hind did first her country cates provide;
Then couched herself securely by her side.

PART THE THIRD.

MUCH malice, mingled with a little wit,
Perhaps may censure this mysterious writ;
Because the Muse has peopled Caledon
With Panthers, Bears, and Wolves, and beasts unknown,
As if we were not stocked with monsters of our own.
Let Æsop answer, who has set to view
Such kinds as Greece and Phrygia never knew;
And Mother Hubbard, in her homely dress,
Has sharply blamed a British Lioness;
That queen, whose feast the factious rabble keep,
Exposed obscenely naked and asleep.
Led by those great examples, may not I
The wanted organs of their words supply?

If men transact like brutes, 'tis equal, then,
For brutes to claim the privilege of men.*

Others our Hind of folly will indite,
To entertain a dangerous guest by night.
Let those remember, that she cannot die
Till rolling time is lost in round eternity;
Nor need she fear the Panther, though untamed,
Because the Lion's peace was now proclaimed:
The wary savage would not give offence,
To forfeit the protection of her Prince;
But watched the time her vengeance to complete,
When all her furry sons in frequent Senate met;
Meanwhile she quenched her fury at the flood,
And with a lenten salad cooled her blood.
Their commons, though but coarse, were nothing scant,
Nor did their minds an equal banquet want.

For now the Hind, whose noble nature strove
To express her plain simplicity of love,
Did all the honours of her house so well,
No sharp debates disturbed the friendly meal.
She turned the talk, avoiding that extreme,
To common dangers past, a sadly-pleasing theme;
Remembering every storm which tossed the state,
When both were objects of the public hate,
And dropt a tear betwixt for her own children's fate.

Nor failed she then a full review to make
Of what the Panther suffered for her sake:
Her lost esteem, her truth, her loyal care,
Her faith unshaken to an exiled heir,
Her strength to endure, her courage to defy,
Her choice of honourable infamy.
On these, prolixly thankful, she enlarged;
Then with acknowledgment herself she charged;

* In these lines, Dryden anticipates the censures of the critics, and defends the incongruities of the poem, by an appeal to former examples.

For friendship, of itself an holy tie,
Is made more sacred by adversity.
Now should they part, malicious tongues would say,
They met like chance companions on the way,
Whom mutual fear of robbers had possessed;
While danger lasted, kindness was professed;
But that once o'er, the short-lived union ends:
The road divides, and there divide the friends.

The Panther nodded, when her speech was done,
And thanked her coldly in a hollow tone:
But said, her gratitude had gone too far
For common offices of Christian care.
If to the lawful heir she had been true,
She paid but Cæsar what was Cæsar's due.
'I might,' she added, 'with like praise describe
Your suffering sons, and so return your bribe:
But incense from my hands is poorly prized;
For gifts are scorned where givers are despised.
I served a turn, and then was cast away;
You, like the gaudy fly, your wings display,
And sip the sweets, and bask in your great Patron's day.'

This heard, the matron was not slow to find
What sort of malady had seized her mind:
Disdain, with gnawing envy, fell despite,
And cankered malice, stood in open sight:
Ambition, interest, pride without control,
And jealousy, the jaundice of the soul;
Revenge, the bloody minister of ill,
With all the lean tormentors of the will.
'Twas easy now to guess from whence arose
Her new-made union with her ancient foes,
Her forced civilities, her faint embrace,
Affected kindness with an altered face:
Yet durst she not too deeply probe the wound,
As hoping still the nobler parts were sound;
Eut strove with anodynes to assuage the smart,
And mildly thus her medicine did impart:

'Complaints of lovers help to ease their pain;
 It shows a rest of kindness to complain;
 A friendship loth to quit its former hold;
 And conscious merit, may be justly bold.
 But much more just your jealousy would show,
 If others' good were injury to you:
 Witness, ye heavens, how I rejoice to see
 Rewarded worth and rising loyalty!
 Your warrior offspring that upheld the crown,
 The scarlet honour of your peaceful gown,
 Are the most pleasing objects I can find,
 Charms to my sight, and cordials to my mind:
 When virtue spooms before a prosperous gale,
 My heaving wishes help to fill the sail;*
 And if my prayers for all the brave were heard,
 Cæsar should still have such, and such should still reward.

'The laboured earth your pains have sowed and tilled;
 'Tis just you reap the product of the field:
 Yours be the harvest, 'tis the beggar's gain
 To glean the fallings of the loaded wain.
 Such scattered ears as are not worth your care,
 Your charity, for alms, may safely spare,
 For alms are but the vehicles of prayer.
 My daily bread is literally implored;
 I have no barns nor granaries to hoard.
 If Cæsar to his own his hand extends,
 Say which of yours his charity offends;
 You know, he largely gives to more than are his friends.
 Are you defrauded, when he feeds the poor?
 Our mite decreases nothing of your store.
 I am but few, and by your fare you see
 My crying sins are not of luxury.
 Some juster motive sure your mind withdraws,
 And makes you break our friendship's holy laws;
 For barefaced envy is too base a cause.

* To fill the sail, in connexion with the word spoom, is an error.
Spoorn, an obsolete sea term, meant, to go before the wind *without* a
 sail. It was sometimes spelt *spoon*.

Shew more occasion for your discontent;
Your love, the Wolf, would help you to invent:
Some German quarrel, or, as times go now,
Some French, where force is uppermost, will do.
When at the fountain's head, as merit ought
To claim the place, you take a swilling draught;
How easy 'tis an envious eye to throw,
And tax the sheep for troubling streams below;
Or call her, when no farther cause you find,
An enemy professed of all your kind!
But then, perhaps, the wicked world would think,
The Wolf designed to eat as well as drink.'

This last allusion galled the Panther more,
Because, indeed, it rubbed upon the sore;
Yet seemed she not to wince, though shrewdly pained;
But thus her passive character maintained:

'I never grudged, whate'er my foes report,
Your flaunting fortune in the Lion's court.
You have your day, or you are much belied,
But I am always on the suffering side;
You know my doctrine, and, I need not say,
I will not, but I cannot disobey.
Their malice, too, a sore suspicion brings,
For though they dare not bark, they snarl at kings.
On this firm principle I ever stood:
He of my sons who fails to make it good,
By one rebellious act renounces to my blood.'

'Ah!' said the Hind, 'how many sons have you,
Who call you mother, whom you never knew!
But most of them who that relation plead,
Are such ungracious youths as wish you dead.
They gape at rich revenues which you hold,
And fain would nibble at your grandame gold;
Inquire into your years, and laugh to find
Your crazy temper shews you much declined.
Were you not dim and doted, you might see
A pack of cheats that claim a pedigree,
No more of kin to you, than you to me.

Do you not know, that, for a little coin,
Heralds can foist a name into the line?
They ask your blessing but for what you have;
But once possessed of what with care you save,
The wanton boys would piss upon your grave.

'Your sons of latitude that court your grace,
Though most resembling you in form and face,
Are far the worst of your pretended race;
And, but I blush your honesty to blot,
Pray God you prove them lawfully begot:
For, in some Popish libels I have read,
The Wolf has been too busy in your bed;
At least her hinder parts, the belly-piece,
The paunch, and all that Scorpio claims, are his.
Nor blame them for intruding in your line;
Fat bishoprics are still of right divine.

'Think you, your new French proselytes are come
To starve abroad, because they starved at home?
Your benefices twinkled from afar;
They found the new Messiah by the star;
Those Swisses fight on any side for pay,
And 'tis the living that conforms, not they.
Mark with what management their tribes divide,
Some stick to you, and some to t'other side,
That many churches may for many mouths provide.
More vacant pulpits would more converts make;
All would have latitude enough to take;
The rest unbeneficed your sects maintain;
For ordinations without cures are vain,
And chamber practice is a silent gain.
Your sons of breadth at home are much like these;
Their soft and yielding metals run with ease;
They melt, and take the figure of the mould,
But harden and preserve it best in gold.'

'Your Delphic sword,' the Panther then replied,
'Is double-edged, and cuts on either side.
Some sons of mine, who bear upon their shield
Three steeples argent in a sable field,

Have sharply taxed your converts, who, unfed,
Have followed you for, miracles of bread;
Such who themselves of no religion are,
Allured with gain, for any will declare.
Bare lies with bold assertions they can face,
But dint of argument is out of place;
The grim logician puts them in a fright;
'Tis easier far to flourish than to fight.
Thus, our eighth Henry's marriage they defame;
They say, the schism of beds began the game,
Divorcing from the Church to wed the dame;
Though largely proved, and by himself professed,
That conscience, conscience would not let him rest,—
I mean, not till possessed of her he loved,
And old, uncharming Catherine was removed.
For sundry years before he did complain,
And told his ghostly confessor his pain.
With the same impudence, without a ground
They say, that, look the Reformation round,
No treatise of humility is found.
But if none were, the gospel does not want;
Our Saviour preached it, and I hope you grant,
The Sermon on the Mount was Protestant.
'No doubt,' replied the Hind, 'as sure as all
The writings of Saint Peter and Saint Paul;
On that decision let it stand or fall.
Now for my converts, who, you say, unfed,
Have followed me for miracles of bread.
Judge not by hearsay, but observe at least,
If since their change their loaves have been increased.*

* This line was, no doubt, intended by Dryden to have a special application to himself; and the discovery of the fact that the increase of his pension took effect full seven years before the publication of the *Hind and the Panther*, throws an unexpected light upon it. The line, indeed, incidentally corroborates the fact itself, which must have been known to many of his contemporaries. It may be safely assumed that he would never have ventured to make so bold an assertion, if the increased annuity had followed his conversion, as related by Mr. Macaulay. The reader may here be reminded that the Exchequer

The Lion buys no converts; if he did,
 Beasts would be sold as fast as he could bid.
 Tax those of interest who conform for gain,
 Or stay the market of another reign:
 ur broad-way sons would never be too nice
 To close with Calvin, if he paid their price;
 But, raised threesteeples higher, would change their note,
 And quit the cassock for the canting-coat.
 Now, if you damn this censure as too bold,
 Judge by yourselves, and think not others sold.
 'Meantime my sons accused, by fame's report,
 Pay small attendance at the Lion's court,
 Nor rise with early crowds, nor flatter late;
 For silently they beg who daily wait.
 Preferment is bestowed, that comes unsought;
 Attendance is a bribe, and then 'tis bought.
 How they should speed, their fortune is untried;
 For not to ask, is not to be denied.
 For what they have, their God and king they bless,
 And hope they should not murmur had they less.
 But if reduced subsistence to implore,
 In common prudence they would pass your door.
 Unpitied Hudibras, your champion friend,
 Has shown how far your charities extend.
 This lasting verse shall on his tomb be read,
 'He shamed you living, and upbraids you dead.'*

Warrant, which I have given in the memoir, dated 6th May, 1684, orders the payment of *arrears* of the additional £100 a-year, one quarter of which is stated in the body of the warrant to have been *due at Lady Day, 1680*; so that it must have been actually granted *before the latter date*. I have not, however, raised any argument in the memoir upon that very obvious fact, being content to rest the whole case upon the date of the warrant itself. But it is quite clear that the original grant of the pension, authenticated by the warrant, bore a date antecedent to 1680.

* Sir Walter Scott justly observes, that the blame of neglecting Butler rested with the court of Charles II., and not with the church. *Hudibras* was no less serviceable to royalty than to the established religion, and royalty alone had the power of rewarding the author.

'With odious atheist names you load your foes; *
Your liberal clergy why did I expose?
It never fails in charities like those.
In climes where true religion is professed,
That imputation were no laughing jest;
But *Imprimatur*, with a chaplain's name,
Is here sufficient licence to defame.
What wonder is't that black detraction thrives?
The homicide of names is less than lives;
And yet the perjured murderer survives.'

This said, she paused a little, and suppressed
The boiling indignation of her breast.
She knew the virtue of her blade, nor would
Pollute her satire with ignoble blood;
Her panting foe she saw before her eye,
And back she drew the shining weapon dry.
So when the generous Lion has in sight
His equal match, he rouses for the fight;
But when his foe lies prostrate on the plain,
He sheaths his paws, uncurls his angry mane,
And, pleased with bloodless honours of the day,
Walks over and disdains the inglorious prey.
So James, if great with less we may compare,
Arrests his rolling thunder-bolts in air;
And grants ungrateful friends a lengthened space,
To implore the remnants of long-suffering grace.

This breathing-time the matron took; and then
Resumed the thread of her discourse again.

* The lines that follow, and several similar allusions scattered through the poem, refer to Dr. Stillingfleet, who treated Dryden's religious opinions somewhat roughly in the controversy about the Duchess of York. When the Duchess died, Dryden wrote a Defence of a paper, in which she had stated her reasons for embracing the Church of Rome. Stillingfleet published an answer to the Defence, which produced another Defence, ascribed to Dryden, though there is reason to believe it was not written by him. Stillingfleet returned to the charge in a vindication of his answer; and, under the impression that Dryden had written both Defences, assailed him with unsparing severity, accusing him of having no religion at all, and, in plain terms, denouncing him as an atheist.

'Be vengeance wholly left to powers divine,
And let Heaven judge betwixt your sons and mine:
If joys hereafter must be purchased here
With loss of all that mortals hold so dear,
Then welcome infamy and public shame,
And last, a long farewell to worldly fame.
'Tis said with ease, but, oh, how hardly tried
By haughty souls to human honour tied!
Oh, sharp convulsive pangs of agonizing pride!
Down then, thou rebel, never more to rise;
And what thou didst, and dost, so dearly prize,
That fame, that darling fame, make that thy sacrifice.
'Tis nothing thou hast given; then add thy tears
For a long race of unrepenting years:
'Tis nothing yet, yet all thou hast to give:
Then add those may-be years thou hast to live:
Yet nothing still: then poor and naked come,
Thy Father will receive his unthrift home,
And thy blest Saviour's blood discharge the mighty sum.
'Thus,' she pursued, 'I discipline a son,
Whose unchecked fury to revenge would run;
He champs the bit, impatient of his loss,
And starts aside, and flounders at the Cross.
Instruct him better, gracious God, to know,
As thine is vengeance so forgiveness too;
That, suffering from ill tongues, he bears no more
Than what his sovereign bears, and what his Saviour bore.
'It now remains for you to school your child,
And ask why God's anointed he reviled;*

* Dryden's Defence of the Duchess of York was accompanied by two papers found in the strong box of Charles II., the purport of which was to prove, that the Church of Rome was the one true church. The publication was issued not only under the sanction, but by the express command, of James II.; and when Stillingfleet answered it, the partizans of the Court charged him with disrespect towards the king, in undertaking to refute a book which had appeared under his majesty's auspices—as if there were a royalty in matters of opinion, which it was not for a subject to meddle with. Dryden echoes this unwarrantable imputation when he says, that Stillingfleet reviled God's

A king and princess dead! did Shimei worse?
 The curser's punishment should fright the curse;
 Your son was warned, and wisely gave it o'er,
 But he who counselled him has paid the score;
 The heavy malice could no higher tend,
 But woe to him on whom the weights descend.
 So to permitted ills the dæmon flies;
 His rage is aimed at him who rules the skies:
 Constrained to quit his cause, no succour found,
 The foe discharges every tire around,
 In clouds of smoke abandoning the fight;
 But his own thundering peals proclaim his flight.
 'In Henry's change his charge as ill succeeds;
 To that long story little answer needs:
 Confront but Henry's words with Henry's deeds.
 Were space allowed, with ease it might be proved,
 What springs his blessed reformation moved.
 The dire effects appeared in open sight,
 Which from the cause he calls a distant flight,
 And yet no larger leap than from the sun to light.
 'Now last your sons a double pæan sound,
 A Treatise of Humility is found.
 'Tis found, but better had it ne'er been sought,
 Than thus in Protestant procession brought.
 The famed original through Spain is known,
 Rodriguez' work, my celebrated son,
 Which yours, by ill-translating, made his own;

anointed—an assertion contradicted by every page of the Answer in which his majesty's name occurs. Stillingfleet was careful not only to treat the king personally with deference, but to show that the controversy in no way implicated his own loyalty to the throne. 'It can be no reflection on the authority of a prince,' he observes, in his introduction, 'for a private subject to examine a piece of coin as to its just value, though it bears his image and superscription upon it.' As for the papers containing the profession of faith of Charles II., it is doubtful whether they were entitled to the reverence demanded for them; they were certainly in that Sovereign's handwriting; but Burnet says his majesty's most intimate friends were confident he had never composed them, his ignorance and levity on the subject of religion precluding such a supposition, and that it is probable they were written by Lord Bristol, or Lord Aubigny, who had prevailed upon the king to copy them out with his own hand.

Concealed its author, and usurped the name,
The basest and ignoblest theft of fame.
My altars kindled first that living coal;
Restore, or practise better what you stole;
That virtue could this humble verse inspire,
'Tis all the restitution I require.'

Glad was the Panther that the charge was closed,
And none of all her favourite sons exposed;
For laws of arms permit each injured man,
To make himself a saviour where he can.
Perhaps the plundered merchant cannot tell
The names of pirates in whose hands he fell;
But at the den of thieves he justly flies,
And every Algerine is lawful prize.
No private person in the foe's estate
Can plead exemption from the public fate.
Yet Christian laws allow not such redress;
Then let the greater supersede the less.
But let the abettors of the Panther's crime
Learn to make fairer wars another time.
Some characters may sure be found to write
Among her sons; for 'tis no common sight,
A spotted dam, and all her offspring white.

The savage, though she saw her plea controlled,
Yet would not wholly seem to quit her hold,
But offered fairly to compound the strife,
And judge conversion by the convert's life.

'Tis true,' she said, 'I think it somewhat strange,
So few should follow profitable change;
For present joys are more to flesh and blood,
Than a dull prospect of a distant good.
'Twas well alluded by a son of mine,
(I hope to quote him is not to purloin)
Two magnets, heaven and earth, allure to bliss;
The larger loadstone that, the nearer this:
The weak attraction of the greater fails;
We nod awhile, but neighbourhood prevails;
But when the greater proves the nearer too,
I wonder more your converts come so slow.

Methinks in those who firm with me remain,
It shows a nobler principle than gain.'

'Your inference would be strong,' the Hind replied,
'If yours were in effect the suffering side;
Your clergy-sons their own in peace possess,
Nor are their prospects in reversion less.
My proselytes are struck with awful dread,
Your bloody comet-laws hang blazing o'er their head;
The respite they enjoy but only lent,
The best they have to hope, protracted punishment.
Be judge yourself, if interest may prevail,
Which motives, yours or mine, will turn the scale.
While pride and pomp allure, and plenteous ease,
That is, till man's predominant passions cease,
Admire no longer at my slow increase.

'By education most have been misled;
So they believe, because they so were bred.
The priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man.
The rest I named before, nor need repeat;
But interest is the most prevailing cheat,
The sly seducer both of age and youth;
They study that, and think they study truth.
When interest fortifies an argument,
Weak reason serves to gain the will's assent;
For souls, already warped, receive an easy bent.
Add long prescription of established laws,
And pique of honour to maintain a cause,
And shame of change, and fear of future ill,
And zeal, the blind conductor of the will;
And chief, among the still-mistaking crowd,
The fame of teachers obstinate and proud,
And, more than all, the private judge allowed;
Disdain of Fathers which the dance began,
And last, uncertain whose the narrower span,
The clown unread, and half-read gentleman.'

To this the Panther, with a scornful smile:
'Yet still you travel with unwearied toil,

And range around the realm without control,
Among my sons for proselytes to prowl;
And here and there you snap some silly soul.
You hinted fears of future change in state;
Pray Heaven you did not prophesy your fate!
Perhaps, you think your time of triumph near,
But may mistake the season of the year;
The Swallow's fortune gives you cause to fear.'

'For charity,' replied the matron, 'tell
What sad mischance those pretty birds befel.'

'Nay, no mischance,' the savage dame replied,
'But want of wit in their unerring guide,
And eager haste, and gaudy hopes, and giddy pride.
Yet, wishing timely warning may prevail,
Make you the moral, and I'll tell the tale.

'The Swallow, privileged above the rest
Of all the birds, as man's familiar guest,
Pursues the sun, in summer brisk and bold,
But wisely shuns the persecuting cold;
Is well to chancels and to chimneys known,
Though 'tis not thought she feeds on smoke alone.
From hence she has been held of heavenly line,
Endued with particles of soul divine.

This merry chorister had long possessed
Her summer seat, and feathered well her nest;
Till frowning skies began to change their cheer,
And time turned up the wrong side of the year;
The shedding trees began the ground to strow
With yellow leaves, and bitter blasts to blow.
Sad auguries of winter thence she drew,
Which, by instinct, or prophecy, she knew:
When prudence warned her to remove betimes,
And seek a better heaven, and warmer climes.

'Her sons were summoned on a steeple's height,
And, called in common council, vote a flight;'

* When King James suspended the penal laws, and adopted still more direct measures for the encouragement and maintenance of the church of Rome in this kingdom, considerable alarm was excited

The day was named, the next that should be fair;
 All to the general rendezvous repair, [air.
 They try their fluttering wings and trust themselves in
 But whether upward to the moon they go,
 Or dream the winter out in caves below,
 Or hawk at flies elsewhere, concerns us not to know.
 Southwards, you may be sure, they bent their flight,
 And harboured in a hollow rock at night;
 Next morn they rose, and set up every sail;
 The wind was fair, but blew a mackerel gale:
 The sickly young sat shivering on the shore,
 Abhorred salt-water never seen before,
 And prayed their tender mothers to delay .
 The passage, and expect a fairer day.
 'With these the Martin readily concurred,
 A church-begot, and church-believing bird;
 Of little body, but of lofty mind,
 Round bellied, for a dignity designed,
 And much a dunce, as Martins are by kind;

amongst the people. Even the Roman Catholics themselves betrayed their apprehension that he was going too far, and that the open favours he showered upon them might ultimately produce a re-action, which would place them in a worse position than they had been in before. In this crisis a meeting of Roman Catholics was held in the Savoy, for the purpose of taking into consideration what course they ought to pursue. A variety of opinions were expressed, the majority of voices tending to some modification or compromise calculated to conciliate the Protestants, and many being desirous of providing for their safety by selling their estates, and leaving the country. Father Petre, who was in the chair on this occasion, succeeded in overruling their timid suggestions, and prevailing upon the meeting to rest confident in the king's protection. This Father Petre was private confessor to his majesty, and exercised unbounded influence in the royal closet. Sir Walter Scott supposes that the conclave of swallows is intended to represent this meeting, and that the Martin of the fable, which opposes their flight across the seas, is designed for Father Petre. The closeness of the incidents to the actual circumstances of the time gives a strong colouring of probability to this conjecture; yet it is difficult to reconcile Dryden's scornful description of Father Petre, spoken even, as it is, by the Panther, with his new zeal for the church of Rome, and his respect for the king. It helped to strengthen the accusation, that he held all priests in equal contempt, brought against him by Stillingfleet, on the evidence of the well-known line in *Absalom and Achitophel*,—also quoted by Collier,—

'For priests of all religions are the same.'

Yet often quoted Canon-laws, and Code,
And Fathers which he never understood;
But little learning needs in noble blood.
For, sooth to say, the Swallow brought him in
Her household chaplain, and her next of kin:
In superstition silly to excess,
And casting schemes by planetary guess;
In fine, short-winged, unfit himself to fly,
His fear foretold foul weather in the sky.
Besides, a Raven from a withered oak,
Left of their lodging, was observed to croak.
That omen liked him not; so his advice
Was present safety, bought at any price;
A seeming pious care, that covered cowardice.
To strengthen this, he told a boding dream,
Of rising waters, and a troubled stream,
Sure signs of anguish, dangers, and distress,
With something more not lawful to express:
By which he slyly seemed to intimate
Some secret revelation of their fate.
For he concluded, once upon a time,
He found a leaf inscribed with sacred rhyme,
Whose antique characters did well denote
The Sibyl's hand of the Cumæan grot:
The mad divineress had plainly writ,
A time should come, (but many ages yet,)
In which, sinister destinies ordain,
A dame should drown with all her feathered train,
And seas from thence be called the Chelidonian main.
At this, some shook for fear; the more devout
Arose, and blessed themselves from head to foot.
'Tis true, some stagers of the wiser sort
Made all these idle wonderments their sport:
They said, their only danger was delay,
And he, who heard what every fool could say,
Would never fix his thought, but trim his time away.
The passage yet was good; the wind, 'tis true,
Was somewhat high, but that was nothing new,
No more than usual equinoxes blew.

The sun, already from the Scales declined,
Gave little hopes of better days behind,
But change from bad to worse of weather and of wind.
Nor need they fear the dampness of the sky
Should flag their wings, and hinder them to fly,
'Twas only water thrown on sails too dry.
But, least of all, philosophy presumes
Of truth in dreams, from melancholy fumes;
Perhaps the Martin, housed in holy ground,
Might think of ghosts, that walk their midnight round,
Till grosser atoms, tumbling in the stream
Of fancy, madly met, and clubbed into a dream:
As little weight his vain presages bear,
Of ill effect to such alone who fear;
Most prophecies are of a piece with these,
Each Nostradamus can foretel with ease:
Not naming persons, and confounding times,
One casual truth supports a thousand lying rhymes.

'The advice was true; but fear had seized the most,
And all good counsel is on cowards lost.
The question crudely put to shun delay,
'Twas carried by the major part to stay.

'His point thus gained, Sir Martin dated thence
His power, and from a priest became a prince.
He ordered all things with a busy care,
And cells and refectories did prepare,
And large provisions laid of winter fare;
But now and then let fall a word or two
Of hope, that Heaven some miracle might show,
And, for their sakes, the sun should backward go,
Against the laws of nature upward climb,
And, mounted on the Ram, renew the prime;
For which two proofs in sacred story lay,
Of Ahaz' dial, and of Joshua's day.
In expectation of such times as these,
A chapel housed them, truly called of ease;
For Martin much devotion did not ask;
They prayed sometimes, and that was all their task.

‘It happened, as beyond, the reach of wit,
Blind prophecies may have a lucky hit,
That this accomplished, or at least in part,
Gave great repute to their new Merlin’s art.
Some Swifts, the giants of the Swallow kind,
Large-limbed, stout-hearted, but of stupid mind,
(For Swisses, or for Gibeonites designed,)
These lubbers, peeping through a broken pane,
To suck fresh air, surveyed the neighbouring plain ;
And saw, but scarcely could believe their eyes,
New blossoms flourish, and new flowers arise ;
As God had been abroad, and, walking there,
Had left his footsteps, and reformed the year.
The sunny hills from far were seen to glow
With glittering beams, and in the meads below
The burnished brooks appeared with liquid gold to flow.
At last they heard the foolish Cuckoo sing,
Whose note proclaimed the holiday of spring.

‘No longer doubting, all prepare to fly,
And repossess their patrimonial sky.
The priest before them did his wings display ;
And that good omens might attend their way,
As luck would have it, ’twas St. Martin’s day.
‘Who but the Swallow now triumphs alone?
The canopy of heaven is all her own ;
Her youthful offspring to their haunts repair,
And glide along in glades, and skim in air,
And dip for insects in the purling springs,
And stoop on rivers to refresh their wings.
Their mothers think a fair provision made,
That every son can live upon his trade,
And, now the careful charge is off their hands,
Look out for husbands, and new nuptial bands.
The youthful widow longs to be supplied ;
But first the lover is by lawyers tied
To settle jointure-chimneys on the bride.
So thick they couple, in so short a space,
That Martin’s marriage-offerings rise apace ;

Their ancient houses, running to decay,
Are furbished up, and cemented with clay;
They teem already; stores of eggs are laid,
And brooding mothers call Lucina's aid.
Fame spreads the news, and foreign fowls appear
In flocks, to greet the new returning year,
To bless the founder, and partake the cheer.

'And now 'twas time, so fast their numbers rise,
To plant abroad, and people colonies.
The youth drawn forth, as Martin had desired,
(For so their cruel destiny required),
Were sent far off on an ill-fated day;
The rest would needs conduct them on their way,
And Martin went, because he feared alone to stay.

'So long they flew with inconsiderate haste,
That now their afternoon began to waste;
And, what was ominous, that very morn
The sun was entered into Capricorn:
Which, by their bad astronomer's account,
That week the Virgin balance should remount.
An infant moon eclipsed him in his way,
And hid the small remainders of his day.
The crowd, amazed, pursued no certain mark,
But birds met birds, and jostled in the dark.
Few mind the public in a panic fright,
And fear increased the horror of the night.
Night came, but unattended with repose;
Alone she came, no sleep their eyes to close;
Alone, and black she came; no friendly stars arose.

'What should they do, beset with dangers round,
No neighbouring dorp,* no lodging to be found,
But bleak plains, and bare, inhospitable ground.
The latter brood, who just began to fly,
Sick-feathered, and unpractised in the sky,
For succour to their helpless mother call:
She spread her wings; some few beneath them crawl;
She spread them wider yet, but could not cover all.

* Hamlet or village.

To augment their woes, the winds began to move
Debate in air, for empty fields above,
'Till Boreas got the skies, and poured amain
His rattling hailstones mixed with snow and rain.

'The joyless morning late arose, and found
A dreadful desolation reign around,
Some buried in the snow, some frozen to the ground.
The rest were struggling still with death, and lay
The Crows' and Ravens' rights, an undefended prey:
Excepting Martin's race; for they and he
Had gained the shelter of a hollow tree:
But, soon discovered by a sturdy clown,
He headed all the rabble of a town,
And finished them with bats, or polled them down.
Martin himself was caught alive, and tried
For treasonous crimes, because the laws provide
No Martin there in winter shall abide.
High on an oak, which never leaf shall bear,
He breathed his last, exposed to open air;
And there his corpse, unblessed, is hanging still,
To show the change of winds with his prophetic bill.'*

The patience of the Hind did almost fail,
For well she marked the malice of the tale;
Which ribald art their Church to Luther owes;
In malice it began, by malice grows;
He sowed the Serpent's teeth, an iron-harvest rose.
But most in Martin's character and fate,
She saw her slandered sons, the Panther's hate,
The people's rage, the persecuting state:
Then said, 'I take the advice in friendly part;
You clear your conscience, or at least your heart.
Perhaps you failed in your foreseeing skill,
For Swallows are unlucky birds to kill:

* The miserable end of the fable foreshadows the expectations of the Protestants that the temporary ascendancy of the Roman Catholics would pass away with the life of the Stuart. The prophecy was fulfilled sooner and more completely than was anticipated.

As for my sons, the family is blessed,
 Whose every child is equal to the rest ;
 No church reformed can boast a blameless line,
 Such Martins build in yours, and more than mine ;
 Or else an old fanatic author lies,
 Who summed their scandals up by centuries.*
 But through your parable I plainly see
 The bloody laws, the crowd's barbarity ;
 The sunshine that offends the purblind sight ;
 Had some their wishes, it would soon be night.
 Mistake me not ; the charge concerns not you ;
 Your sons are malcontents, but yet are true,
 As far as non-resistance makes them so ;
 But that's a word of neutral sense, you know,
 A passive term, which no relief will bring,
 But trims betwixt a rebel and a king.'

'Rest well assured,' the Pardelis replied,
 'My sons would all support the regal side, [tried.]
 Though Heaven forbid the cause by battle should be
 The matron answered with a loud 'Amen!'
 And thus pursued her argument again:—

'If, as you say, and as I hope no less,
 Your sons will practise what yourselves profess,
 What angry power prevents our present peace?
 The Lion, studious of our common good,
 Desires (and kings' desires are ill withstood)
 To join our nations in a lasting love ;
 The bars betwixt are easy to remove,
 For sanguinary laws were never made above.
 If you condemn that prince of tyranny,
 Whose mandate forced your Gallic friends to fly,
 Make not a worse example of your own ;
 Or cease to rail at causeless rigour shown,
 And let the guiltless person throw the stone.

* Century White—a fanatical Puritan, who distinguished himself in the crusade against the episcopal clergy. He acquired his *soubriquet* of Century from the name of one of his tracts.

His blunted sword your suffering brotherhood
Have seldom felt; he stops it short of blood:
But you have ground the persecuting knife,
And set it to a razor edge on life.
Cursed be the wit which cruelty refines,
Or to his father's rod the scorpion's joins;
Your finger is more gross than the great monarch's loins.
But you, perhaps, remove that bloody rosette,
And stick it on the first Reformer's coat.
Oh, let their crime in long oblivion sleep;
'Twas theirs indeed to make, 'tis yours to keep.
Unjust, or just, is all the question now;
'Tis plain, that, not repealing, you allow.

'To name the Test would put you in a rage;
You charge not that on any former age,
But smile to think how innocent you stand,
Armed by a weapon put into your hand.
Yet still remember, that you wield a sword
Forged by your foes against your Sovereign Lord;
Designed to hew the imperial cedar down,
Defraud succession, and dis-heir the crown.
To abhor the makers, and their laws approve,
Is to hate traitors, and the treason love.
What means it else, which now your children say,
We made it not, nor will we take away?

'Suppose some great oppressor had, by slight
Of law, disseised your brother of his right,
Your common sire surrendering in a fright;
Would you to that unrighteous title stand,
Left by the villain's will to heir the land?
More just was Judas, who his Saviour sold;
The sacrilegious bribe he could not hold,
Nor hang in peace, before he rendered back the gold
What more could you have done, than now you do,
Had Oates and Bedlow, and their plot, been true?
Some specious reasons for those wrongs were found;
Their dire magicians threw their mists around,
And wise men walked as on enchanted ground.

But now, when time has made the imposture plain,
(Late though he followed Truth, and limping held her
train,)

What new delusion charms your cheated eyes again?
The painted harlot might awhile bewitch,
But why the hag uncased, and all obscene with itch?

‘The first Reformers were a modest race;
Our peers possessed in peace their native place,
And when rebellious arms o’turned the state,
They suffered only in the common fate;
But now the Sovereign mounts the regal chair,
And mitred seats are full, yet David’s bench is bare.
Your answer is, they were not dispossessed;
They need but rub their metal on the Test
To prove their ore; ’twere well if gold alone
Were touched and tried on your discerning stone
But that unfaithful Test unsound will pass
The dross of Atheists, and sectarian brass;
As if the experiment were made to hold
For base productions, and reject the gold.
Thus men ungodded may to places rise,
And sects may be preferred without disguise;
No danger to the Church or State from these;
The Papist only has his writ of ease.
No gainful office gives him the pretence
To grind the subject, or defraud the prince.
Wrong conscience, or no conscience, may deserve
To thrive, but ours alone is privileged to starve.
Still thank yourselves, you cry; your noble race
We banish not, but they forsake the place;
Our doors are open. True, but ere they come,
You toss your ’censing Test, and fume the room,
As if ’twere Toby’s rival to expel,
And fright the fiend who could not bear the smell.’

To this the Panther sharply had replied;
But, having gained a verdict on her side,
She wisely gave the loser leave to chide;

Well satisfied to have the But and Peace,
 And for the plaintiff's cause she cared the less,
 Because she sued in *forma pauperis*;
 Yet thought it decent something should be said,
 For secret guilt by silence is betrayed.
 So neither granted all, nor much denied,
 But answered with a yawning kind of pride:

‘Methinks such terms of proffered peace you bring,
 As once Æneas to the Italian king.
 By long possession all the land is mine;
 You strangers come with your intruding line,
 To share my sceptre, which you call to join.
 You plead like him an ancient pedigree,
 And claim a peaceful seat by fate's decree.
 In ready pomp your sacrificer stands,
 To unite the Trojan and the Latin bands:
 And, that the league more firmly may be tied,
 Demand the fair Lavinia for your bride.
 Thus plausibly you veil the intended wrong,
 But still you bring your exiled gods along;
 And will endeavour, in succeeding space,
 Those household puppets on our hearths to place.
 Perhaps some barbarous laws have been preferred;
 I spake against the Test, but was not heard.
 These to rescind, and peerage to restore,
 My gracious Sovereign would my vote implore;
 I owe him much, but owe my conscience more.’

‘Conscience is then your plea,’ replied the dame,
 ‘Which, well-informed, will ever be the same.
 But yours is much of theameleon hue,
 To change the dye with every distant view.
 When first the Lion sat with awful sway,
 Your conscience taught your duty to obey;
 He might have had your Statutes and your Test;
 No conscience but of subjects was professed.
 He found your temper, and no farther tried,
 But on that broken reed, your Church, relied.

In vain the sects essayed their utmost art,
With offered treasures to espouse their part;
Their treasures were a bribe too mean to move his heart.
But when, by long experience, you had proved
How far he could forgive, how well he loved;
A goodness that excelled his godlike race,
And only short of Heaven's unbounded grace;
A flood of mercy that o'erflowed our isle,
Calm in the rise, and fruitful as the Nile;
Forgetting whence your Egypt was supplied,
You thought your Sovereign bound to send the tide;
Nor upward looked on that immortal spring,
But vainly deemed, he durst not be a king:
Then Conscience, unrestrained by fear, began
To stretch her limits, and extend the span;
Did his indulgence as her gift dispose,
And make a wise alliance with her foes.
Can Conscience own the associating name,
And raise no blushes to conceal her shame?
For sure she has been thought a bashful dame.
But if the cause by battle should be tried,
You grant she must espouse the regal side;
O Proteus Conscience, never to be tied!
What Phœbus from the Tripod shall disclose,
Which are, in last resort, your friends or foes?
Homer, who learned the language of the sky,
The seeming Gordian knot would soon untie;
Immortal powers the term of Conscience know,
But Interest is her name with men below.'

'Conscience or Interest be it, or both in one,'
The Panther answered in a surly tone;
'The first commands me to maintain the crown,
The last forbids to throw my barriers down.
Our penal laws no sons of yours admit,
Our Test excludes your tribe from benefit.
These are my banks your ocean to withstand,
Which proudly rising overlooks the land,

And once let in, with unresisted sway,
Would sweep the pastors and their flocks away.
Think not my judgment leads me to comply
With laws unjust, but hard necessity:
Imperious need, which cannot be withstood,
Makes ill authentic, for a greater good.
Possess your soul with patience, and attend;
A more auspicious planet may ascend;
Good fortune may present some happier time,
With means to cancel my unwilling crime;
(Unwilling, witness all ye Powers above!)
To mend my errors, and redeem your love:
That little space you safely may allow;
Your all-dispensing power protects you now.
‘Hold,’ said the Hind, ‘’tis needless to explain;
You would postpone me to another reign;
Till when, you are content to be unjust:
Your part is to possess, and mine to trust.
A fair exchange proposed of future chance,
For present profit and inheritance.
Few words will serve to finish our dispute;
Who will not now repeal, would persecute.
To ripen green revenge your hopes attend,
Wishing that happier planet would ascend.
For shame, let Conscience be your plea no more;
To will hereafter proves she might before;
But she’s a bawd to gain, and holds the door.
‘Your care about your banks infers a fear
Of threatening floods and inundations near;
If so, a just reprise would only be
Of what the land usurped upon the sea;
And all your jealousies but serve to show,
Your ground is, like your neighbour-nation, low.
To entrench in what you grant unrighteous laws,
Is to distrust the justice of your cause;
And argues, that the true religion lies
In those weak adversaries you despise.

Tyrannic force is that which least you fear;
 The sound is frightful in a Christian's ear:
 Avert it, Heaven! nor let that plague be sent
 To us from the dispeopled continent.

'But piety commands me to refrain;
 Those prayers are needless in this monarch's reign.
 Behold how he protects your friends oppressed,
 Receives the banished, succours the distressed!
 Behold, for you may read an honest open breast.
 He stands in daylight, and disdains to hide
 An act, to which by honour he is tied,
 A generous, laudable, and kingly pride.*
 Your Test he would repeal, his peers restore;
 This when he says he means, he means no more.'

'Well,' said the Panther, 'I believe him just,
 And yet——'

—'And yet, 'tis but because you must;
 You would be trusted, but you would not trust.'
 The Hind thus briefly; and disdained to enlarge
 On power of Kings, and their superior charge,
 As Heaven's trustees before the people's choice,
 Though sure the Panther did not much rejoice
 To hear those echoes given of her once loyal voice.

The matron wooed her kindness to the last,
 But could not win; her hour of grace was passed.

* James II. was fully entitled to the applause here bestowed upon him for the succour and protection he afforded the Huguenots, who were compelled to fly from France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The fact is testified by Burnet. The hesitation of the Panther, nevertheless, who cannot be induced to repose implicit confidence in his majesty, because he had given a hospitable reception to the victims of Louis XIV.'s tyranny, is not so unreasonable as it is made to appear. Setting aside the distrust with which the faithlessness of the Stuarts may be supposed to have inspired the Panther, it would have been illogical to have drawn a general conclusion from a particular instance of toleration shown by a Roman-catholic king in a Protestant country to Protestant refugees. The Panther, in a controversy where she is so closely pressed on every item of the argument, is clearly justified in withholding her assent to the implied inference that James would act in the same spirit if he ruled over a Roman-catholic people.

Whom, thus persisting, when she could not bring
To leave the Wolf, and to believe her King,
She gave her up, and fairly wished her joy
Of her late treaty with her new ally:
Which well she hoped would more successful prove,
Than was the Pigeon's and the Buzzard's love.
The Panther asked what concord there could be
Betwixt two kinds whose natures disagree?
The dame replied: 'Tis sung in every street,
The common chat of gossips when they meet;
But, since unheard by you, 'tis worth your while
To take a wholesome tale, though told in homely style.

' A plain good man, whose name is understood,*
(So few deserve the name of plain and good,)
Of three fair lineal lordships stood possessed,
And lived, as reason was, upon the best.
Inured to hardships from his early youth,
Much had he done and suffered for his truth:
At land and sea, in many a doubtful fight,
Was never known a more adventurous knight,
Who oftener drew his sword and always for the right.
' As fortune would (his fortune came, though late),
He took possession of his just estate;
Nor racked his tenants with increase of rent,
Nor lived too sparing, nor too largely spent;

* The character of James II. drawn in the succeeding lines may be profitably contrasted with the character given of him by other writers. The Bloody Assizes stand out in history as the terrible monument of a spirit of persecution unparalleled in our annals. Macaulay, deriving his figures from the list sent by the judges to the Treasury, states the number of rebels hanged by Jeffreys on that memorable circuit to have been 320; Burnet says it was 600; Lord Lonsdale, 700. 'No English sovereign,' says Macaulay, 'has ever given stronger proofs of a cruel nature than James II. Yet his cruelty was not more odious than his mercy: or perhaps it may be more correct to say, that his mercy and his cruelty were such, that each reflects infamy on the other.' The Panther is, notwithstanding, taunted by the Hind for entertaining a slight doubt as to how far she can safely trust this monarch, and told that, for all her scruples, she 'must' admit him to be 'just.'

But overlooked his hinds; their pay was just,
 And ready, for he scorned to go on trust:
 Slow to resolve, but in performance quick;
 So true, that he was awkward at a trick.
 For little souls on little shifts rely,
 And cowards arts of mean expedients try;
 The noble mind will dare do anything but lie.
 False friends (his deadliest foes) could find no way,
 But shows of honest bluntness, to betray;
 That unsuspected plainness he believed;
 He looked into himself, and was deceived.
 Some lucky planet sure attends his birth,
 Or Heaven would make a miracle on earth:
 For prosperous honesty is seldom seen
 To bear so dead a weight, and yet to win.
 It looks as fate with nature's law would strive,
 To show plain-dealing once an age may thrive;
 And, when so tough a frame she could not bend,
 Exceeded her commission to befriend.

'This grateful man, as Heaven increased his store,
 Gave God again, and daily fed his poor.
 His house with all convenience was purveyed;
 The rest he found, but raised the fabric where he prayed;
 And in that sacred place his beauteous wife
 Employed her happiest hours of holy life.

'Nor did their alms extend to those alone,
 Whom common faith more strictly made their own;
 A sort of Doves were housed too near their hall,*
 Who cross the proverb, and abound with gall.

* The Doves are the clergy of the Church of England. The application of the proverb about the ill birds that soil their own nest is not so obvious. The 'domestic poultry' which the 'good man' keeps for his own use 'behind his house,' are the Roman-catholic priests who were maintained in the private chapel at Whitehall. The parable is skilfully carried out; and the ingenuity with which the cock that warned St. Peter is made to call up the royal family to their morning devotions, and to summon them again to midnight prayers, much to the annoyance of the 'pampered pigeons,' is not the least artful stroke in this palace picture of the rival churches. 'Sister Partlet, with her hooded head,' represents the cloistered community of nuns.

Though some, 'tis true, are passively inclined,
The greater part degenerate from their kind;
Voracious birds, that hotly bill and breed,
And largely drink, because on salt they feed.
Small gain from them their bounteous owner draws
Yet, bound by promise, he supports their cause,
As corporations privileged by laws.

'That house, which harbour to their kind affords,
Was built, long since, God knows, for better birds;
But fluttering there, they nestle near the throne,
And lodge in habitations not their own,
By their high crops and corny gizzards known.
Like Harpies, they could scent a plenteous board,
Then to be sure they never failed their lord:
The rest was form, and bare attendance paid;
They drank, and eat, and grudgingly obeyed.
The more they fed, they ravened still for more;
They drained from Dan, and left Beersheba poor.
All this they had by law, and none repined;
The preference was but due to Levi's kind:
But when some lay-preferment fell by chance,
The Gourmands made it their inheritance.
When once possessed they never quit their claim,
For then 'tis sanctified to Heaven's high name;
And hallowed thus, they cannot give consent,
The gift should be profaned by worldly management.

'Their flesh was never to the table served;
Though 'tis not thence inferred the birds were starved;
But that their master did not like the food,
As rank, and breeding melancholy blood.
Nor did it with his gracious nature suit,
E'en though they were not Doves, to persecute:
Yet he refused (nor could they take offence)
Their glutton kind should teach him abstinence.
Nor consecrated grain their wheat he thought,
Which, new from treading, in their bills they brought:
But left his hinds each in his private power,
That those who like the bran might leave the flour.

He for himself, and not for others, chose,
 Nor would he be imposed on, nor impose;
 But in their faces his devotion paid,
 And sacrifice with solemn rites was made,
 And sacred incense on his altars laid.

‘ Besides these jolly birds, whose corpse impure
 Repaid their commons with their salt manure,
 Another farm he had behind his house,
 Not overstocked, but barely for his use;
 Wherein his poor domestic poultry fed,
 And from his pious hands received their bread.
 Our pampered Pigeons, with malignant eyes,
 Beheld these inmates, and their nurseries;
 Though hard their fare, at evening, and at morn,
 A cruse of water and an ear of corn,
 Yet still they grudged that modicum, and thought
 A sheaf in every single grain was brought.
 Fain would they filch that little food away,
 While unrestrained those happy gluttons prey.
 And much they grieved to see so nigh their hall,
 The bird that warned St. Peter of his fall;*
 That he should raise his mitred crest on high,
 And clap his wings and call his family
 To sacred rites; and vex the ethereal powers
 With midnight matins at uncivil hours;
 Nay more, his quiet neighbours should molest,
 Just in the sweetness of their morning rest.
 Beast of a bird, supinely when he might
 Lie snug and sleep, to rise before the light!
 What if his dull forefathers used that cry,
 Could he not let a bad example die?

* Leigh Hunt has discovered this line in Spenser:

‘ The bird that warnèd Peter of his fall ’

He adds—‘ Spenser, whom chance had put on the side of the Puritans, (for no man would naturally have been more for a gorgeous creed than he,) not unwillingly omitted the title of Saint to Peter. The Catholic Dryden as willingly availed himself of the abbreviated past tense to restore it.’—*Wit and Humour*, p. 273.

The world was fallen into an easier way ;
This age knew better than to fast and pray.
Good sense in sacred worship would appear
So to begin, as they might end the year.
Such feats in former times had wrought the falls
Of crowing Chanticleers in cloistered walls.
Expelled for this, and for their lands, they fled ;
And sister Partlet, with her hooded head,
Was hooted hence, because she would not pray a-bed.
The way to win the restive world to God,
Was to lay by the disciplining rod,
Unnatural fasts, and foreign forms of prayer :
Religion frights us with a mien severe.
'Tis prudence to reform her into ease,
And put her in undress, to make her please ;
A lively faith will bear aloft the mind,
And leave the luggage of good works behind.

‘ Such doctrines in the Pigeon-house were taught ;
You need not ask how wondrously they wrought ;
But sure the common cry was all for these,
Whose life and precepts both encouraged ease.
Yet fearing those alluring baits might fail,
And holy deeds o’er all their arts prevail,
(For vice, though frontless, and of hardened face,
Is daunted at the sight of awful grace,)
An hideous figure of their foes they drew,
Nor lines, nor looks, nor shades, nor colours true ;
And this grotesque design exposed to public view.
One would have thought it some Egyptian piece,
With garden-gods, and barking deities,
More thick than Ptolemy has stuck the skies.
All so perverse a draught, so far unlike,
It was no libel where it meant to strike.
Yet still the daubing pleased, and great and small,
To view the monster, crowded Pigeon-hall.
There Chanticleer was drawn upon his knees,
Adorning shrines, and stocks of sainted trees ;

And by him, a mis-shapen, ugly race;
 The curse of God was seen on every face.
 No Holland emblem could that malice mend,
 But still the worse the look, the fitter for a fiend.
 'The master of the farm, displeased to find
 So much of rancour in so mild a kind,
 Inquired into the cause, and came to know,
 The Passive Church had struck the foremost blow;
 With groundless fears, and jealousies possessed,
 As if this troublesome intruding guest
 Would drive the birds of Venus from their nest.
 A deed his inborn equity abhorred; [his word.
 But Interest will not trust, though God should plight
 'A law, the source of many future harms,
 Had banished all the poultry from the farms,
 With loss of life, if any should be found
 To crow or peck on this forbidden ground.
 That bloody statute chiefly was designed
 For Chanticleer the white, of clergy kind;
 But after-malice did not long forget
 The lay that wore the robe and coronet.
 For them, for their inferiors and allies,
 Their foes a deadly Shibboleth devise: *
 By which unrighteously it was decreed,
 That none to trust, or profit, should succeed,
 Who would not swallow first a poisonous wicked weed;
 Or that, to which old Socrates was cursed,
 Or henbane juice to swell them till they burst.
 'The patron, as in reason, thought it hard
 To see this inquisition in his yard,
 By which the Sovereign was of subjects' use debarred.
 All gentle means he tried, which might withdraw
 The effects of so unnatural a law:
 But still the Dove-house obstinately stood
 Deaf to their own, and to their neighbours' good;

* The Test Act imposed upon all members of Parliament a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation.

And which was worse, if any worse could be,
Repented of their boasted loyalty;
Now made the champions of a cruel cause,
And drunk with fumes of popular applause:
For those whom God to ruin has designed,
He fits for fate, and first destroys their mind.

‘New doubts indeed they daily strove to raise,
Suggested dangers, interposed delays;
And emissary Pigeons had in store,
Such as the Meccan prophet used of yore,
To whisper counsels in their patron’s ear;
And veiled their false advice with zealous fear.
The master smiled to see them work in vain,
To wear him out, and make an idle reign:
He saw, but suffered their protractive arts,
And strove by mildness to reduce their hearts;
But they abused that grace to make allies,
And fondly closed with former enemies;
For fools are doubly fools, endeavouring to be wise.

‘After a grave consult what course were best,
One, more mature in folly than the rest,
Stood up, and told them with his head aside,
That desperate cures must be to desperate ills applied:
And therefore, since their main impending fear
Was from the increasing race of Chanticleer,
Some potent bird of prey they ought to find,
A foe professed to him, and all his kind:
Some haggard Hawk, who had her eyrie nigh,
Well pounced to fasten, and well winged to fly:
One they might trust the common wrongs to wreak.
The Musquet and the Coystrel were too weak;
Too fierce the Falcon; but, above the rest,
The noble Buzzard ever pleased me best:*

* In the Buzzard we have a caricature portrait of Burnet, whose lusty figure appears to have made him the mark of many a scurrilous lampoon. There is some truth, mixed with a great deal of party venom, in this sketch of his character. But, conspicuous as Burnet rendered himself in his opposition to the Roman Catholics, he hardly merited the distinction of ‘Captain of the Test.’

Of small renown, 'tis true; for, not to lie,
We call him but a Hawk by courtesy.
I know he hates the Pigeon-house and Farm,
And more, in time of war, has done us harm :
But all his hate on trivial points depends ;
Give up our forms, and we shall soon be friends.
For Pigeons' flesh he seems not much to care ;
Crammed chickens are a more delicious fare.
On this high potentate, without delay,
I wish you would confer the sovereign sway ;
Petition him to accept the government,
And let a splendid embassy be sent.

'This pithy speech prevailed ; and all agreed,
Old enmities forgot, the Buzzard should succeed.

'Their welcome suit was granted soon as heard,
His lodgings furnished, and a train prepared,
With Bs upon their breast, appointed for his guard.
He came, and crowned with great solemnity,
God save king Buzzard ! was the general cry.

'A portly prince, and goodly to the sight,
He seemed a son of Anak for his height :
Like those whom stature did to crowns prefer ;
Black-browed, and bluff, like Homer's Jupiter ;
Broad-backed, and brawny-built for love's delight,
A prophet formed to make a female proselyte.
A theologue more by need than genial bent ;
By breeding sharp, by nature confident,
Interest in all his actions was discerned ;
More learned than honest, more a wit than learned ;
Or forced by fear, or by his profit led,
Or both conjoined, his native clime he fled :
But brought the virtues of his heaven along ;
A fair behaviour, and a fluent tongue.
And yet with all his arts he could not thrive,
The most unlucky parasite alive ;
Loud praises to prepare his paths he sent,
And then himself pursued his compliment ;

But by reverse of fortune chased away,
His gifts no longer than their author stay;
He shakes the dust against the ungrateful race,
And leaves the stench of ordures in the place.
Oft has he flattered and blasphemed the same;
For in his rage he spares no Sovereign's name:
The hero and the tyrant change their style,
By the same measure that they frown or smile.
When well received by hospitable foes,
The kindness he returns, is to expose;
For courtesies, though undeserved and great,
No gratitude in felon-minds beget;
As tribute to his wit, the churl receives the treat.
His praise of foes is venomously nice;
So touched, it turns a virtue to a vice:
'A Greek, and bountiful, forewarns us twice.'
Seven sacraments he wisely does disown,
Because he knows Confession stands for one;
Where sins to sacred silence are conveyed,
And not for fear, or love, to be betrayed:
But he, uncalled, his patron to control,
Divulged the secret whispers of his soul;
Stood forth th' accusing Satan of his crimes,
And offered to the Moloch of the times.
Prompt to assail, and careless of defence,
Invulnerable in his impudence,
He dares the world; and, eager of a name,
He thrusts about, and justles into fame.
Frontless, and satire-proof, he scours the streets,
And runs an Indian-muck at all he meets.
So fond of loud report, that not to miss
Of being known, (his last and utmost bliss,)
He rather would be known for what he is.
'Such was, and is, the Captain of the Test,
Though half his virtues are not here expressed;
The modesty of fame conceals the rest.
The spleenful Pigeons never could create
A prince more proper to revenge their hate;

Indeed, more proper to revenge, than save;
A king, whom in his wrath the Almighty gave:
For all the grace the landlord had allowed,
But made the Buzzard and the Pigeons proud;
Gave time to fix their friends, and to seduce the crowd.
They long their fellow-subjects to enthrall,
Their patron's promise into question call,
And vainly think he meant to make them lords of all.

'False fears their leaders failed not to suggest,
As if the Doves were to be dispossessed;
Nor sighs, nor groans, nor goggling eyes did want;
For now the Pigeons too had learned to cant.
The house of prayer is stocked with large increase;
Nor doors nor windows can contain the press,
For birds of every feather fill the abode;
E'en Atheists out of envy own a God;
And, reeking from the stews, adulterers come,
Like Goths and Vandals to demolish Rome.
That Conscience, which to all their crimes was mute,
Now calls aloud, and cries to persecute:
No rigour of the laws to be released,
And much the less, because it was their Lord's request:
They thought it great their Sovereign to control,
And named their pride, nobility of soul.

'Tis true, the Pigeons, and their prince elect,
Were short of power, their purpose to effect:
But with their quills did all the hurt they could,
And cuffed the tender chickens from their food:
And much the Buzzard in their cause did stir,
Though naming not the patron, to infer,
With all respect, he was a gross idolater.

'But when the imperial owner did espy,
That thus they turned his grace to villany,
Not suffering wrath to discompose his mind,
He strove a temper for the extremes to find.
So to be just, as he might still be kind:
Then, all maturely weighed, pronounced a doom
Of sacred strength for every age to come.

By this the Doves their wealth and state possess,
No rights infringed, but licence to oppress:
Such power have they as factious lawyers long
To crowns ascribed, that Kings can do no wrong.
But since his own domestic birds have tried
The dire effects of their destructive pride,
He deems that proof a measure to the rest,
Concluding well within his kingly breast,
His fowls of nature too unjustly were oppressed.
He therefore makes all birds of every sect
Free of his farm, with promise to respect
Their several kinds alike, and equally protect.
His gracious edict the same franchise yields
To all the wild increase of woods and fields,
And who in rocks aloof, and who in steeples builds:
To Crows the like impartial grace affords,
And Choughs and Daws, and such republic birds;
Secured with ample privilege to feed,
Each has his district, and his bounds decreed:
Combined in common interest with his own,
But not to pass the Pigeon's Rubicon.

‘Here ends the reign of his pretended Dove;
All prophecies accomplished from above,
For Shiloh comes the sceptre to remove.
Reduced from her imperial high abode,
Like Dionysius to a private rod,
The Passive Church, that, with pretended grace,
Did her distinctive mark in duty place,
Now touched, reviles her Maker to his face.

‘What after happened is not hard to guess;
The small beginnings had a large increase,
And arts and wealth succeed (the secret spoils of peace).
’Tis said, the Doves repented, though too late,
Become the smiths of their own foolish fate:
Nor did their owner hasten their ill hour,
But, sunk in credit, they decreased in power:
Like snows in warmth that mildly pass away,
Dissolving in the silence of decay.

'The Buzzard, not content with equal place,
Invites the feathered Nimrods of his race,
To hide the thinness of their flock from sight,
And all together make a seeming goodly flight:
But each have separate interests of their own;
Two Czars are one too many for a throne.
Nor can the usurper long abstain from food;
Already he has tasted Pigeon's blood,
And may be tempted to his former fare,
When this indulgent lord shall late to heaven repair.
Bare bending times, and moulting months may come,
When, lagging late, they cannot reach their home;
Or rent in schism (for so their fate decrees)
Like the tumultuous college of the bees,
They fight their quarrel, by themselves oppressed;
The tyrant smiles below, and waits the falling feast.'

Thus did the gentle Hind her fable end,
Nor would the Panther blame it, nor commend;
But, with affected yawnings at the close,
Seemed to require her natural repose;
For now the streaky light began to peep,
And setting stars admonished both to sleep.
The dame withdrew, and, wishing to her guest
The peace of heaven, betook herself to rest.
Ten thousand angels on her slumbers wait,
With glorious visions of her future state.

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

[THIS song was written in 1687. A full account of the origin of the festival of St. Cecilia's day, in England, will be found in MALONE'S Dryden, *Miscellaneous Works*, i. 255. St. Cecilia was a Roman lady who had been educated in the Christian faith, for which she underwent martyrdom in the third century. The traditions upon which her claim to the honour of being the patroness of music is founded, are obscure

and inconsistent; and all that can be gathered from them is, that she was an excellent musician, and played upon the organ, which some say she invented, but to which others assign an earlier date. In the Roman-catholic church she had long been recognised in that character, and her birthday, the 22nd of November, had for centuries been devoted to a musical anniversary in most of the countries of Europe. The first commemoration of the day in England took place in 1683,* when Henry Purcell composed the music. The next year the anniversary was held in Stationers' Hall, where it continued to be celebrated, with few interruptions, for nearly twenty years. The author of the first Ode, a miserable piece of rant, is unknown. The Ode of 1684 was written by Oldham, and that of 1685 by Nahum Tate. In 1686 there was no performance, and in 1687 Dryden furnished the necessary contingent of verses. Of the previous compositions, Oldham's was the best. It was properly limited to a general expression of the influence of music, and the following lines are worthy of preservation:

' Hark, how the wakened strings resound,
And break the yielding air,
The ravished sense how pleasingly they wound,
And call the listening soul into the ear.'†

Tate made sad work of the subject, invoking lutes and flutes, and 'jolly swains,' and kids and lambkins to celebrate the day. Begging a holiday for the kids and lambkins, he goes on—

' Let them feed, or let them love;
Let them love, or let them stray,
Let them feed, or let them play,' &c.,

* In Scott's notes on this Ode, it is stated, that a musical society, for the annual commemoration of St. Cecilia's Day, was formed in 1680. This is an oversight. A room for public concerts was fitted up in that year in Villiers Street, York Buildings; but the musical society in honour of St. Cecilia was not organized till two years afterwards.

† A similar image occurs in a song in Cartwright's *Royal Slave*, (1636):

' Come, my sweets, while every strayne
Calls our souls into the eare,
Where the greedy, listening, fayne
Would turn into the sound they hear.

while his 'nymphs and jolly swains' were to be 'kindly mingled on the plains.' After such melancholy stuff as this, the noble ode of Dryden, which was set to music by Draghi, an Italian composer, must have startled the worshipful congregation at Stationers' Hall. The first stanza is unsurpassed for the fulness of its melody; nor is Dr. Johnson's objection to the use of the word diapason as being too technical likely to spoil the enjoyment of the reader.]

I

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
 When nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
 And could not heave her head,
 The tuneful voice was heard from high,
 'Arise, ye more than dead.'
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
 In order to their stations leap,
 And Music's power obey.
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
 From harmony to harmony
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
 The diapason closing full in Man.

2

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
 When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
 His listening brethren stood around,
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
 To worship that celestial sound:
 Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell,
 That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
 What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

3

The trumpet's loud clangor
 Excites us to arms,

With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, hark! the foes come;
Charge, Charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

4

The soft complaining flute,
In dying notes, discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

5

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

6

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

7

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared
Mistaking earth for heaven.*

* According to the legend of St. Cecilia, an angel, attracted by her musical performances, fell in love with her, and used to visit her at night. She seems to have strangely violated the obligations of Christianity, out of her pious respect for this celestial visitor; as it appears that she refused to her husband, a pagan gentleman, the rights to which both Pagan and Christian dispensations entitled him, assigning as a

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
 The spheres began to move,
 And sung the great Creator's praise
 To all the blessed above;
 So when the last and dreadful hour
 This crumbling pageant shall devour,
 The trumpet shall be heard on high,
 The dead shall live, the living die,
 And Music shall untune the sky.*

BRITANNIA REDIVIVA :

A POEM ON THE PRINCE, BORN ON THE 10TH OF JUNE, 1688.

[THE title of this poem, published 23rd June, 1688, exactly thirteen days after the birth of a prince, depicts the exultation with which the event it commemorates was received by the Roman Catholics, rather than by the people of England. The hopes of that party were, naturally enough, revived by an occurrence which interposed a direct heir between the Princess of Orange and the throne of this kingdom. They had long abandoned all expectations of that nature. The queen's children had died in their infancy, and some years had elapsed since she had had any. In the height of their joy, however,

reason, that the angel was enamoured of her, and would destroy him if he attempted to touch her person. The husband demanded ocular proof that it was an angelic and not a human rival that interfered with his domestic privileges; which was granted to him on condition that he became a Christian. Having complied with the condition, he was introduced to his wife's chamber, where he found the angel in the shape of a beautiful youth clad in the usual sky garments, with two coronals of lilies and roses, which he had brought from Paradise, to crown the martyrdom of the immaculate couple, which, as a matter of course, followed soon afterwards.

* The last line falls flat upon the preceding description. 'The conclusion,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is striking; but it includes an image so awful in itself, that it can owe little to poetry; and I could wish the antithesis of *music untuning* had some other place.'

they committed the indiscretion of ascribing her majesty's pregnancy to miraculous agency, which led the Protestants, equally fanatical, no doubt, on their side, to denounce the birth as an imposture. The unlucky prince who came into the world under these untoward circumstances paid a bitter penalty afterwards for the rash zeal of his friends. His birth being regarded as a fraud, he was himself ignominiously expelled as a Pretender, and compelled to exchange the title of Prince of Wales for the travelling name of the Chevalier de St. George.

Dryden, taking up the view of the subject that prevailed in his own communion, and that was most likely to be acceptable at court, treated the birth of this unfortunate prince as a miracle. Heaven had heard the supplications of the people, had sent angels half-way to anticipate them, and the 'mighty Trinity' is supposed to have 'conspired' to send the new-born guest to rule over three realms, as a type of their own mystic union! The favourite image of forcing boons from Heaven by clamorous petitions, is again employed to illustrate the efficacy of prayers. The calendar is drawn into the service of congratulation, and the saints and archangels are mixed up with the gods of the mythology, that nothing shall be wanted to confer the highest poetical lustre on the occasion. There is no instance in which this sort of mixture of Christian and heathen powers is carried to so daring a height. The influence Dryden's new faith obtained over his imagination is conspicuous in this poem. Whether it helped to purify his taste it is needless to inquire.]

OUR vows are heard betimes ! and Heaven takes care
To grant, before we can conclude the prayer :
Preventing angels met it half the way,
And sent us back to praise, who came to pray.
Just on the day, when the high-mounted sun
Did farthest in its northern progress run,
He bended forward, and even stretched the sphere
Beyond the limits of the lengthened year,

To view a brighter sun in Britain born ;
That was the business of his longest morn ;
The glorious object seen, 'twas time to turn.

Departing Spring could only stay to shed
Her gloomy beauties on the genial bed,
But left the manly Summer in her stead,
With timely fruit the longing land to cheer,
And to fulfil the promise of the year.
Betwixt two seasons comes the auspicious heir,
This age to blossom, and the next to bear.

Last solemn sabbath saw the Church attend,
The Paraclete in fiery pomp descend ;
But when his wondrous octave rolled again,
He brought a royal infant in his train :
So great a blessing to so good a king,
None but the Eternal Comforter could bring.

Or did the mighty Trinity conspire,
As once, in council to create our sire ?
It seems as if they sent the new-born guest
To wait on the procession of their feast ;
And on their sacred anniverse decreed
To stamp their image on the promised seed.
Three realms united, and on one bestowed,
An emblem of their mystic union showed :
The Mighty Trine the triple empire shared,
As every person would have one to guard.

Hail, son of prayers ! by holy violence
Drawn down from heaven ; but long be banished thence
And late to thy paternal skies retire :
To mend our crimes, whole ages would require,
To change the inveterate habit of our sins,
And finish what thy godlike sire begins.
Kind Heaven, to make us Englishmen again,
No less can give us than a patriarch's reign.

The sacred cradle to your charge receive,
Ye seraphs, and by turns the guard relieve ;
Thy father's angel, and thy father join,
To keep possession, and secure the line ;

But long defer the honours of thy fate;
Great may they be like his, like his be late;
That James his running century may view,
And give this son an auspice to the new.

Our wants exact at least that moderate stay.
For, see the Dragon* wingèd on his way,
To watch the travail, and devour the prey.
Or, if allusions may not rise so high,
Thus, when Alcides raised his infant cry,
The snakes besieged his young divinity;
But vainly with their forked tongues they threat;
For opposition makes a hero great.
To needful succour all the good will run,
And Jove assert the godhead of his son.

Oh, still repining at your present state,
Grudging yourselves the benefits of fate,
Look up, and read, in characters of light,
A blessing sent you in your own despite!
The manna falls, yet that celestial bread,
Like Jews, you munch, and murmur while you feed.
May not your fortune be like theirs, exiled,
Yet forty years to wander in the wild;
Or, if it be, may Moses live at least,
To lead you to the verge of promised rest!

Though poets are not prophets, to foreknow
What plants will take the blight, and what will grow,
By tracing Heaven his footsteps may be found;
Behold! how awfully he walks the round!
God is abroad, and, wondrous in his ways,
The rise of empires, and their fall, surveys;
More (might I say) than with an usual eye,
He sees his bleeding Church in ruin lie,
And hears the souls of saints beneath his altar cry.
Already has he lifted high the sign,
Which crowned the conquering arms of Constantine:

* Alluding only to the commonwealth party here, and in other parts of the poem.—ORIG. ED.

The moon* grows pale at that presaging sight,
And half her train of stars have lost their light.

Behold another Sylvester,† to bless
The sacred standard, and secure success;
Large of his treasures, of a soul so great,
As fills and crowds his universal seat.
Now view at home a second Constantine;
(The former too was of the British line)
Has not his healing balm your breaches closed,
Whose exile many sought, and few opposed?
Or, did not Heaven by its eternal doom
Permit those evils, that this good might come?
So manifest, that e'en the moon-eyed sects
See whom and what this Providence protects.
Methinks, had we within our minds no more
Than that one shipwreck on the fatal Ore,‡
That only thought may make us think again,
What wonders God reserves for such a reign.
To dream that chance his preservation wrought,
Were to think Noah was preserved for nought;
Or the surviving eight were not designed
To people earth, and to restore their kind.§

When humbly on the royal babe we gaze,
The manly lines of a majestic face
Give awful joy; 'tis Paradise to look
On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book:
If the first opening page so charms the sight,
Think how the unfolded volume will delight!

* The Crescent, which the Turks bear for their arms.—ORIG. ED.

† The Pope in the time of Constantine the Great.—ORIG. ED.

‡ The Lemman Ore, the sandbank on which the Duke of York was nearly wrecked on his voyage to Scotland in 1682.

§ The enumeration of the perils the king had come safely cut of to mount the throne at last,—exile, shipwreck,—is produced as evidence that his preservation was as much the special design of Providence as the preservation of the inmates of the ark. The events that happened in England six months afterwards suggest a humiliating commentary on the presumptuous spirit in which this passage is conceived, and which, indeed, pervades the whole poem.

See how the venerable infant lies *
 In early pomp; how through the mother's eyes
 The father's soul, with an undaunted view,
 Looks out, and takes our homage as his due.
 See on his future subjects how he smiles,
 Nor meanly flatters, nor with craft beguiles;
 But with an open face, as on his throne,
 Assures our birthrights, and assumes his own.
 Born in broad day-light, that the ungrateful rout
 May find no room for a remaining doubt; †
 Truth, which itself is light, does darkness shun,
 And the true eaglet safely dares the sun.

Fain would the fiends have made a dubious birth,
 Loth to confess the Godhead clothed in earth;
 But, sickened, after all their baffled lies,
 To find an heir-apparent in the skies,
 Abandoned to despair, still may they grudge,
 And, owning not the Saviour, prove the judge.

Not great Æneas stood in plainer day,
 When, the dark mantling mist dissolved away,
 He to the Tyrians shewed his sudden face,
 Shining with all his goddess mother's grace;

* Venerable is applied to the infant in the old and legitimate sense of veneration or worship. 'The places where saints have suffered . . . rendered venerable by their death.'—HOOKER.

† Yet, though the queen's chamber was crowded by people who were called in to witness the birth, it was doubted, nevertheless, and Burnet was amongst the sceptics. Had there been no attempt made to cast a halo of celestial glory over an ordinary human occurrence, the usual proofs by which such incidents are attested would probably have passed unquestioned. But it is not surprising that a natural fact should awaken suspicion when it is ostentatiously referred to other than natural causes. The following lines are chargeable with an impiety that shows the indecent lengths into which the Roman Catholics suffered themselves to be betrayed in the ecstatic fanaticism of the hour. It was foolish enough for the Jesuits to say that the royal conception was due to their invocation, or for others to attribute it to the queen's personal influence with a particular saint; but the deliberate profanity of comparing the birth of the prince to that of the Saviour casts all the rest into the shade.

For she herself had made his countenance bright,
Breathed honour on his eyes, and her own purple light.

If our victorious Edward, as they say,
Gave Wales a prince on that propitious day,
Why may not years, revolving with his fate,
Produce his like, but with a longer date;
One, who may carry to a distant shore
The terror that his famed forefather bore?
But why should James, or his young hero, stay
For slight presages of a name or day?
We need no Edward's fortune to adorn
That happy moment when our prince was born;
Our prince adorns this day, and ages hence
Shall wish his birth-day for some future prince.

Great Michael, prince of all the ethereal hosts,
And whate'er inborn saints our Britain boasts;
And thou, the adopted patron of our isle,
With cheerful aspects on this infant smile!
The pledge of Heaven, which, dropping from above,
Secures our bliss, and reconciles his love.

Enough of ills our dire rebellion wrought,
When to the dregs we drank the bitter draught;
Then airy atoms did in plagues conspire,
Nor did the avenging angel yet retire,
But purged our still increasing crimes with fire.
Then perjured plots, the still impending Test,
And worse—but charity conceals the rest.
Here stop the current of the sanguine flood;
Require not, gracious God! thy martyrs' blood;
But let their dying pangs, their living toil,
Spread a rich harvest through their native soil;
A harvest ripening for another reign,
Of which this royal babe may reap the grain.

Enough of early saints one womb has given;
Enough increased the family of heaven:
Let them for his and our atonement go,
And reigning blest above, leave him to rule below.

Enough already has the year foreshowed
 His wonted course, the sea has overflowed,
 The meads were floated with a weeping spring,
 And frightened birds in woods forgot to sing;
 The strong-limbed steed beneath his harness faints,
 And the same shivering sweat his lord attaints.
 When will the minister of wrath give o'er?
 Behold him at Araunah's threshing-floor:
 He stops, and seems to sheathe his flaming brand,
 Pleased with burnt incense from our David's hand.
 David has bought the Jebusite's abode,
 And raised an altar to the living God.

Heaven, to reward him, makes his joy sincere;
 No future ills nor accidents appear,
 To sully and pollute the sacred infant's year.
 Five months to discord and debate were given;
 He sanctifies the yet remaining seven.
 Sabbath of months! henceforth in him be blest,
 And prelude to the realm's perpetual rest!

Let his baptismal drops for us atone;
 Lustrations for offences not his own.
 Let Conscience, which is Interest ill disguised,*
 In the same font be cleansed, and all the land baptized.

Unnamed as yet, at least unknown to fame,
 Is there a strife in Heaven about his name?
 Where every famous predecessor vies,
 And makes a faction for it in the skies?
 Or must it be reserved to thought alone?
 Such was the sacred Tetragrammaton.†
 Things worthy silence must not be revealed:
 Thus the true name of Rome was kept concealed,‡

* 'Immortal powers the term of Conscience know,
 But Interest is her name with men below.'

Hind and Panther.

† Jehovah, or the name of God, unlawful to be pronounced by the Jews.—ORIG. ED.

‡ Some authors say, that the true name of Rome was kept a secret:
Ne hostes incantamentis deos elicerent.—ORIG. ED.

To shun the spells and sorceries of those
 Who durst her infant majesty oppose.
 But when his tender strength in time shall rise
 To dare ill tongues, and 'fascinating eyes,
 This isle, which hides the little Thunderer's fame,
 Shall be too narrow to contain his name:
 The artillery of Heaven shall make him known;
 Crete could not hold the god, when Jove was grown.*

As Jove's increase, who from his brain was born,
 Whom arms and arts did equally adorn,
 Free of the breast was bred, whose milky taste
 Minerva's name to Venus had debased;†
 So this imperial babe rejects the food
 That mixes monarch's with plebeian blood:
 Food that his inborn courage might control,
 Extinguish all the father in his soul,
 And, for his Estian race, and Saxon strain,
 Might reproduce some second Richard's reign.
 Mildness he shares from both his parents' blood:
 But kings too tame are despicably good:
 Be this the mixture of this regal child,
 By nature manly, but by virtue mild.

Thus far the furious transport of the news
 Had to prophetic madness fired the Muse:
 Madness ungovernable, uninspired,
 Swift to foretel whatever she desired.
 Was it for me the dark abyss to tread,
 And read the book which angels cannot read?
 How was I punished when the sudden blast,‡
 The face of heaven, and our young sun, o'ercast!
 Fame, the swift ill, increasing as she rolled,
 Disease, despair, and death, at three reprises told:

* Candia, where Jupiter was born, and lived secretly.—ORIG. ED.

† Pallas, or Minerva, said by the poets to have been bred up by hand.
 —ORIG. ED. In the case of the infant prince, the wet-nurse was, in like
 manner, dispensed with.

‡ A false report was circulated through the town of the prince's
 death.

At three insulting strides she stalked the town,
And, like contagion, struck the loyal down.
Down fell the winnowed wheat; but mounted high,
The whirlwind bore the chaff, and hid the sky.
Here black rebellion shooting from below,
(As earth's gigantic brood by moments grow)
And here the sons of God are petrified with woe:
An apoplex of grief! so low were driven
The saints, as hardly to defend their heaven.

As, when pent vapours run their hollow round,
Earthquakes, which are convulsions of the ground,
Break bellowing forth, and no confinement brook,
Till the third settles what the former shook;
Such heavings had our souls, till, slow and late,
Our life with his returned, and faith prevailed on fate.
By prayers the mighty blessing was implored,
To prayers was granted, and by prayers restored.

So, ere the Shunamite a son conceived,
The prophet promised, and the wife believed:
A son was sent, the son so much desired;
But soon upon the mother's knees expired.
The troubled seer approached the mournful door,
Ran, prayed, and sent his pastoral staff before,
Then stretched his limbs upon the child, and mourned,
Till warmth, and breath, and a new soul returned.

Thus Mercy stretches out her hand, and saves
Desponding Peter, sinking in the waves.

As when a sudden storm of hail and rain
Beats to the ground the yet unbearded grain,
Think not the hopes of harvest are destroyed
On the flat field, and on the naked void;
The light, unloaded stem, from tempest freed,
Will raise the youthful honours of his head;
And, soon restored by native vigour, bear
The timely product of the bounteous year.

Nor yet conclude all fiery trials past,
For Heaven will exercise us to the last;

Sometimes will check us in our full career,
With doubtful blessings, and with mingled fear;
That, still depending on his daily grace,
His every mercy for an alms may pass;
With sparing hands will diet us to good,
Preventing surfeits of our pampered blood.
So feeds the mother bird her craving young
With little morsels, and delays them long.

True, this last blessing was a royal feast;
But, where's the wedding-garment on the guest?
Our manners, as religion were a dream,
Are such as teach the nations to blaspheme.
In lusts we wallow, and with pride we swell,
And injuries with injuries repel;
Prompt to revenge, not daring to forgive,
Our lives unteach the doctrine we believe.
Thus Israel sinned, impenitently hard,
And vainly thought the present ark their guard;
But when the haughty Philistines appear,
They fled, abandoned to their foes and fear;
Their God was absent, though his ark was there.
Ah! lest our crimes should snatch this pledge away,
And make our joys the blessings of a day!
For we have sinned him hence, and that he lives,
God to his promise, not our practice, gives.
Our crimes would soon weigh down the guilty scale,
But James, and Mary, and the Church prevail.
Nor Amalek can rout the chosen bands,
While Hur and Aaron hold up Moses' hands.

By living well, let us secure his days;
Moderate in hopes, and humble in our ways.
No force the free-born spirit can constrain,
But charity and great examples gain.
Forgiveness is our thanks for such a day;
'Tis god-like God in his own coin to pay.

But you, propitious queen, translated here,
From your mild heaven, to rule our rugged sphere,
Beyond the sunny walks, and circling year;

You, who your native climate have bereft
 Of all the virtues, and the vices left;
 Whom piety and beauty make their boast,
 Though beautiful is well in pious lost;
 So lost as star-light is dissolved away,
 And melts into the brightness of the day;
 Or gold about the regal diadem,
 Lost to improve the lustre of the gem;—
 What can we add to your triumphant day?
 Let the great gift the beauteous giver pay;
 For should our thanks awake the rising sun,
 And lengthen, as his latest shadows run, [done.
 That, though the longest day, would soon, too soon, be
 Let angels' voices with their harps conspire,
 But keep the auspicious infant from the choir;
 Late let him sing above, and let us know
 No sweeter music than his cries below.*

Nor can I wish to you, great monarch, more
 Than such an annual income to your store;
 The day, which gave this unit, did not shine
 For a less omen, than to fill the trine.
 After a prince, an admiral beget;
 The Royal Sovereign wants an anchor yet.
 Our isle has younger titles still in store,
 And when the exhausted land can yield no more,
 Your line can force them from a foreign shore.

The name of Great your martial mind will suit;
 But justice is your darling attribute:
 Of all the Greeks, 'twas but one hero's due,
 And, in him, Plutarch prophesied of you.
 A prince's favours but on few can fall,
 But justice is a virtue shared by all.

Some kings the name of conquerors have assumed,
 Some to be great, some to be gods presumed;

* This exquisite apostrophe to the queen is noted for its smoothness by Scott. And if the panegyric that follows, on James II., had a shadow of foundation in historical truth, it would be equally entitled to admiration.

But boundless power, and arbitrary lust,
 Made tyrants still abhor the name of just;
 They shunned the praise this godlike virtue gives,
 And feared a title that reproached their lives.

The power, from which all kings derive their state,
 Whom they pretend, at least, to imitate,
 Is equal both to punish and reward;
 For few would love their God, unless they feared.

Resistless force and immortality
 Make but a lame, imperfect deity;
 Tempests have force unbounded to destroy,
 And deathless being even the damned enjoy;
 And yet Heaven's attributes, both last and first,
 One without life, and one with life accurst:
 But justice is Heaven's self, so strictly he,
 That, could it fail, the Godhead could not be.
 This virtue is your own; but life and state
 Are one to fortune subject, one to fate:
 Equal to all, you justly frown or smile;
 Nor hopes nor fears your steady hand beguile;
 Yourself our balance hold, the world's, our isle.

A LETTER TO SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE.

[AMONGST the poems of Etherege, the earliest, and certainly one of the best of the comedy writers of the Restoration, will be found the Epistle to the Earl of Middleton, to which this easy and playful poem is the answer, written at the earl's request. Etherege was then at Ratisbon, where he held the appointment of Envoy, which he obtained through the favour of the Duchess of York, afterwards queen, and where, in a moment of hilarity, he came by his tragical death. This is the only instance in which Dryden uses the octo-syllabic verse, which he had spoken of contemptuously in his *Essay on Satire*. He shews, however, that he can use it with as brilliant an effect as Etherege himself. 'It flows as easily from

his pen,' says Scott, the most competent of judges, 'as if he had never written in another measure.']

TO you who live in chill degree,
As map informs, of fifty-three,
And do not much for cold atone,
By bringing thither fifty-one,
Methinks all climes should be alike;
From tropic e'en to pole artique;
Since you have such a constitution
As nowhere suffers diminution.
You can be old in grave debate,
And young in love-affairs of state;
And both to wives and husbands show
The vigour of a plenipo.
Like mighty missionary you come
Ad Partes Infidelium.

A work of wondrous merit sure,
So far to go, so much to endure;
And all to preach to German dame,
Where sound of Cupid never came.
Less had you done, had you been sent
As far as Drake or Pinto went,
For cloves or nutmegs to the line-a,
Or e'en for oranges to China,
That had indeed been charity;
Where love-sick ladies helpless lie,
Chapt, and, for want of liquor, dry.
But you have made your zeal appear
Within the circle of the Bear.
What region of the earth's so dull,
That is not of your labours full?
Triptolemus (so sung the Nine)
Strewed plenty from his cart divine;
But spite of all these fable-makers,
He never sowed on Almain acres:
No, that was left by Fate's decree,
To be performed and sung by thee.

Thou breakest through forms with as much ease
As the French king through articles.
In grand affairs thy days are spent,
In waging weighty compliment,
With such as monarchs represent.
They, whom such vast fatigues attend,
Want some soft minutes to unbend,
To show the world that, now and then,
Great ministers are mortal men.
Then Rhenish rummers walk the round;
In bumpers every king is crowned;
Besides three holy mitred Hectors,
And the whole college of Electors.
No health of potentate is sunk,
That pays to make his envoy drunk.
These Dutch delights, I mentioned last,
Suit not, I know, your English taste:
For wine to leave a whore or play,
Was ne'er your Excellency's way.
Nor need this title give offence,
For here you were your Excellence;
For gaming, writing, speaking, keeping,
His Excellence for—all but sleeping.
Now if you tope in form, and treat,
'Tis the sour sauce to the sweet meat,
The fine you pay for being great.
Nay, here's a harder imposition,
Which is indeed the court's petition,
That setting worldly pomp aside,
Which poet has at font denied,
You would be pleased in humble way
To write a trifle called a Play.
This truly is a degradation,
But would oblige the crown and nation
Next to your wise negotiation.
If you pretend, as well you may,
Your high degree, your friends will say,
The duke St. Aignon made a play.

If Gallio wit convince you scarce,
 His grace of Bucks has made a farce,
 And you, whose comic wit is terse all,
 Can hardly fall below Rehearsal.
 Then finish what you have began,
 But scribble faster if you can :
 For yet no George, to our discerning,
 Has writ without a ten years' warning.

ELEONORA :

A PANEGYRICAL POEM, DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
 THE LATE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.

[It would be unreasonable to expect much pathos or interest in a formal elegy written to order, especially when it happens, as on this occasion, to be composed in an interval of gout. It appears that the Earl of Abingdon commanded Dryden to prepare a funeral poem on the death of his wife, which took place suddenly in a ball-room in her own house in 1691; but some months elapsed before the poet executed his commission. The subject evidently did not inspire him, and he delayed it as long as he could excuse himself. There are marks of labour in every line. The topic was not of his own choosing, and the result of the task-work is, as might be expected, elaborately artificial. The earl is said to have given him 500 guineas for this poem.]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ABINGDON, &c.

MY LORD,—The commands, with which you honoured me some months ago, are now performed: they had been sooner; but betwixt ill-health, some business, and many troubles, I was forced to defer them till this time. Ovid, going to his banishment, and writing from on shipboard to his friends, excused the faults of his poetry by his misfortunes; and told them, that good verses never flow but from a serene and composed spirit. Wit, which is a kind of Mercury, with wings fastened to his head and heels, can fly but slowly in a damp air. I therefore chose rather

to obey you late than ill: if at least I am capable of writing anything, at any time, which is worthy your perusal and your patronage. I cannot say that I have escaped from a shipwreck; but have only gained a rock by hard swimming, where I may pant awhile and gather breath; for the doctors give me a sad assurance, that my disease never took its leave of any man, but with a purpose to return. However, my lord, I have laid hold on the interval, and managed the small stock which age has left me, to the best advantage, in performing this inconsiderable service to my lady's memory. We, who are priests of Apollo, have not the inspiration when we please; but must wait until the god comes rushing on us, and invades us with a fury which we are not able to resist, which gives us double strength while the fit continues, and leaves us languishing and spent at its departure. Let me not seem to boast, my lord, for I have really felt it on this occasion, and prophesied beyond my natural power. Let me add, and hope to be believed, that the excellency of the subject contributed much to the happiness of the execution; and that the weight of thirty years was taken off me while I was writing. I swam with the tide, and the water under me was buoyant. The reader will easily observe, that I was transported by the multitude and variety of my similitudes, which are generally the product of a luxuriant fancy, and the wantonness of wit. Had I called in my judgment to my assistance, I had certainly retrenched many of them. But I defend them not; let them pass for beautiful faults amongst the better sorts of critics: for the whole poem, though written in that which they call Heroic verse, is of the Pindaric nature, as well in the thought as in the expression; and, as such, requires the same grains of allowance for it. It was intended, as your lordship sees in the title, not for an elegy, but a panegyric: a kind of apotheosis, indeed, if a heathen word may be applied to a Christian use. And on all occasions of praise, if we take the ancients for our patterns, we are bound by prescription to employ the magnificence of words, and the force of figures, to adorn the sublimity of thoughts. Isocrates amongst the Grecian orators, and Cicero, and the younger Pliny, amongst the Romans, have left us their precedents for our security: for I think I need not mention the inimitable Pindar, who stretches on these pinions out of sight, and is carried upward, as it were, into another world.

This, at least, my lord, I may justly plead, that, if I have not performed so well as I think I have, yet I have used my best endeavours to excel myself. One disadvantage I have had; which is, never to have known or seen my lady: and to draw the

Ineaments of her mind, from the description which I have received from others, is for a painter to set himself at work without the living original before him: which, the more beautiful it is, will be so much the more difficult for him to conceive, when he has only a relation given him of such and such features by an acquaintance or a friend, without the nice touches, which give the best resemblance, and make the graces of the picture. Every artist is apt enough to flatter himself (and I amongst the rest) that their own ocular observations would have discovered more perfections, at least others, than have been delivered to them: though I have received mine from the best hands, that is, from persons who neither want a just understanding of my lady's worth, nor a due veneration for her memory.

Doctor Donne, the greatest wit, though not the greatest poet of our nation, acknowledges, that he had never seen Mrs. Drury, whom he has made immortal in his admirable Anniversaries. I have had the same fortune, though I have not succeeded to the same genius. However, I have followed his footsteps in the design of his panegyric, which was to raise an emulation in the living, to copy out the example of the dead. And therefore it was, that I once intended to have called this poem *The Pattern*: and though, on a second consideration, I changed the title into the name of the illustrious person, yet the design continues, and *Eleonora* is still the pattern of charity, devotion, and humility; of the best wife, the best mother, and the best of friends.

And now, my lord, though I have endeavoured to answer your commands, yet I could not answer it to the world, nor to my conscience, if I gave not your lordship my testimony of being the best husband now living: I say my testimony only; for the praise of it is given you by yourself. They who despise the rules of virtue both in their practice and their morals, will think this a very trivial commendation. But I think it the peculiar happiness of the Countess of Abingdon, to have been so truly loved by you while she was living, and so gratefully honoured after she was dead. Few there are who have either had, or could have, such a loss; and yet fewer who carried their love and constancy beyond the grave. The exteriors of mourning, a decent funeral, and black habits, are the usual stints of common husbands: and perhaps their wives deserve no better than to be mourned with hypocrisy, and forgot with ease. But you have distinguished yourself from ordinary lovers, by a real and lasting grief for the deceased; and by endeavouring to raise for her the most durable monument, which is that of verse. And so it would have proved, if the workman had been equal to the work, and your choice of

the artificer as happy as your design. Yet, as Phidias, when he had made the statue of Minerva, could not forbear to engrave his own name, as author of the piece: so give me leave to hope, that, by subscribing mine to this poem, I may live by the goddess, and transmit my name to posterity by the memory of hers. It is no flattery to assure your lordship, that she is remembered, in the present age, by all who have had the honour of her conversation and acquaintance; and that I have never been in any company since the news of her death was first brought me, where they have not extolled her virtues, and even spoken the same things of her in prose which I have done in verse.

I therefore think myself obliged to thank your lordship for the commission which you have given me: how I have acquitted myself of it, must be left to the opinion of the world, in spite of any protestation which I can enter against the present age, as incompetent or corrupt judges. For my comfort, they are but Englishmen, and, as such, if they think ill of me to-day, they are inconstant enough to think well of me to-morrow. And after all, I have not much to thank my fortune that I was born amongst them. The good of both sexes are so few, in England, that they stand like exceptions against general rules: and though one of them has deserved a greater commendation than I could give her, they have taken care that I should not tire my pen with frequent exercise on the like subjects; that praises, like taxes, should be appropriated, and left almost as individual as the person. They say, my talent is satire: if it be so, it is a fruitful age, and there is an extraordinary crop to gather. But a single hand is insufficient for such a harvest: they have sown the dragons' teeth themselves, and it is but just they should reap each other in lampoons. You, my lord, who have the character of honour, though it is not my happiness to know you, may stand aside, with the small remainders of the English nobility, truly such, and, unhurt yourselves, behold the mad combat. If I have pleased you, and some few others, I have obtained my end. You see I have disabled myself, like an elected Speaker of the House: yet like him I have undertaken the charge, and find the burden sufficiently recompensed by the honour. Be pleased to accept of these my unworthy labours, this paper-monument; and let her pious memory, which I am sure is sacred to you, not only plead the pardon of my many faults, but gain me your protection, which is ambitiously sought by,

My Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

AS when some great and gracious monarch dies,
Soft whispers, first, and mournful murmurs rise
Among the sad attendants; then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around,
Through town and country, till the dreadful blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last;
Who then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain,
For his long life, and for his happy reign:
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling fame
Did matchless Eleonora's fate proclaim,
Till public as the loss the news became.*

The nation felt it in the extremest parts,
With eyes o'erflowing, and with bleeding hearts;
But most the poor, whom daily she supplied,
Beginning to be such, but when she died.
For, while she lived, they slept in peace by night,
Secure of bread, as of returning light;
And with such firm dependence on the day,
That need grew pampered, and forgot to pray:
So sure the dole, so ready at their call,
They stood prepared to see the manna fall.

Such multitudes she fed, she clothed, she nurst,
That she herself might fear her wanting first.
Of her five talents, other five she made;
Heaven, that had largely given, was largely paid;
And in few lives, in wondrous few, we find
A fortune better fitted to the mind.
Nor did her alms from ostentation fall,
Or proud desire of praise—the soul gave all:
Unbribed it gave; or, if a bribe appear,
No less than heaven, to heap huge treasures there.

Want passed for merit at her open door:
Heaven saw, he safely might increase his poor,

* Johnson condemns the opening, as presenting no illustration; the objects of comparison being identical. 'This is little better than to say in praise of a shrub that it is as green as a tree; or of a brook, that it waters a garden, as a river waters a country.'

And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy whom she saw, or knew ;
All in the compass of her sphere she drew :
He who could touch her garment was as sure,
As the first Christians of the apostles' cure.
The distant heard, by fame, her pious deeds,
And laid her up for their extremest needs ;
A future cordial for a fainting mind ;
For, what was ne'er refused, all hoped to find,
Each in his turn : the rich might freely come,
As to a friend ; but to the poor, 'twas home.
As to some holy house the afflicted came,
The hunger-starved, the naked, and the lame ;
Want and diseases fled before her name.
For zeal like hers, her servants were too slow ;
She was the first, where need required, to go ;
Herself the foundress and attendant too.

Sure she had guests sometimes to entertain,
Guests in disguise, of her great Master's train :
Her Lord himself might come, for aught we know,
Since in a servant's form he lived below :
Beneath her roof he might be pleased to stay ;
Or some benighted angel, in his way,
Might ease his wings, and, seeing Heaven appear
In its best work of mercy, think it there,
Where all the deeds of charity and love
Were in as constant method, as above,
All carried on ; all of a piece with theirs ;
As free her alms, as diligent her cares ;
As loud her praises, and as warm her prayers.

Yet was she not profuse ; but feared to waste,
And wisely managed, that the stock might last ;
That all might be supplied, and she not grieve,
When crowds appeared, she had not to relieve :
Which to prevent, she still increased her store ;
Laid up, and spared, that she might give the more.

So Pharaoh, or some greater king than he,
Provided for the seventh necessity ;
Taught from above his magazines to frame,
That famine was prevented ere it came.
Thus Heaven, though all-sufficient, shows a thrift
In his economy, and bounds his gift ;
Creating, for our day, one single light ;
And his reflection too supplies the night.
Perhaps a thousand other worlds, that lie
Remote from us, and latent in the sky,
Are lightened by his beams, and kindly nurst ;
Of which our earthly dunghill is the worst.

Now, as all virtues keep the middle line,
Yet somewhat more to one extreme incline,
Such was her soul ; abhorring avarice,
Bounteous, but almost bounteous to a vice :
Had she given more, it had profusion been,
And turned the excess of goodness into sin.

These virtues raised her fabric to the sky ;
For that which is next heaven is charity.
But, as high turrets, for their airy steep
Require foundations in proportion deep ;
And lofty cedars as far upward shoot
As to the nether heavens they drive the root :
So low did her secure foundation lie ;
She was not humble, but Humility.
Scarcely she knew that she was great, or fair,
Or wise, beyond what other women are,
Or, which is better, knew, but never durst compare.
For, to be conscious of what all admire,
And not be vain, advances virtue higher.
But still she found, or rather thought she found,
Her own worth wanting, others' to abound ;
Ascribed above their due to every one,
Unjust and scanty to herself alone.

Such her devotion was, as might give rules
Of speculation to disputing schools,

And teach us equally the scales to hold
Betwixt the two extremes of hot and cold;
That pious heat may moderately prevail,
And we be warmed, but not be scorched with zeal.
Business might shorten, not disturb, her prayer;
Heaven had the best, if not the greater share.
An active life long orisons forbids;
Yet still she prayed, for still she prayed by deeds.

Her every day was Sabbath; only free
From hours of prayer, for hours of charity.
Such are the Jews from servile toil released;
Where works of mercy were a part of rest;
Such as blest angels exercise above,
Varied with sacred hymns and acts of love;
Such Sabbaths as that one she now enjoys,
Even that perpetual one, which she employs
(For such vicissitudes in heaven there are)
In praise alternate, and alternate prayer.
All this she practised here; that when she sprung
Amidst the choirs, at the first sight she sung;
Sung, and was sung herself in angel's lays;
For, praising her, they did her Maker praise.
All offices of heaven so well she knew,
Before she came, that nothing there was new;
And she was so familiarly received,
As one returning, not as one arrived.

Muse, down again precipitate thy flight;
For how can mortal eyes sustain immortal light?
But as the sun in water we can bear,
Yet not the sun, but his reflection there,
So let us view her here in what she was,
And take her image in this watery glass:
Yet look not every lineament to see;
Some will be cast in shades, and some will be
So lamely drawn, you'll scarcely know 'tis she.
For where such various virtues we recite,
'Tis like the milky-way, all over bright,
But sown so thick with stars, 'tis undistinguished light.

Her virtue, not her virtues, let us call;
 For one heroic comprehends them all:
 One, as a constellation is but one,
 Though 'tis a train of stars, that, rolling on,
 Rise in their turn, and in the zodiac run,
 Ever in motion; now 'tis faith ascends,
 Now hope, now charity, that upward tends,
 And downwards with diffusive good descends.

As in perfumes composed with art and cost,
 'Tis hard to say what scent is uppermost;
 Nor this part musk or civet can we call,
 Or amber, but a rich result of all;
 So she was all a sweet, whose every part,
 In due proportion mixed, proclaimed the Maker's art.
 No single virtue we could most commend,
 Whether the wife, the mother, or the friend;
 For she was all, in that supreme degree,
 That as **no one** prevailed, so all was she.
 The several parts lay hidden in the piece;
 The occasion but exerted that, or this.

A wife as tender, and as true withal,
 As the first woman was before her fall:
 Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
 Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart.
 A second Eve, but by no crime accurst;
 As beauteous, not as brittle as the first.
 Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
 And death had found no entrance by her sin.
 So she not only had preserved from ill
 Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern still.
 Love and obedience to her lord she bore;
 She much obeyed him, but she loved him more:
 Not awed to duty by superior sway,
 But taught by his indulgence to obey.
 Thus we love God, as author of our good;
 So subjects love just kings, or so they should.
 Nor was it with ingratitude returned;
 In equal fires the blissful couple burned; [mourned.
 One joy possessed them both, and in one grief they

His passion still improved ; he loved so fast,
As if he feared each day would be her last.
Too true a prophet to foresee the fate
That should so soon divide their happy state :
When he to heaven entirely must restore
That love, that heart, where he went halves before.
Yet as the soul is all in every part,
So God and he might each have all her heart.

So had her children too ; for charity
Was not more fruitful, or more kind than she ;
Each under other by degrees they grew ;
A goodly perspective of distant view.
Anchises looked not with so pleased a face,
In numbering o'er his future Roman race,
And marshalling the heroes of his name,
As, in their order, next to light they came.
Nor Cybele, with half so kind an eye,
Surveyed her sons and daughters of the sky ;
Proud, shall I say, of her immortal fruit ?
As far as pride with heavenly minds may suit.
Her pious love excelled to all she bore ;
New objects only multiplied it more.
And as the chosen found the pearly grain
As much as every vessel could contain ;
As in the blissful vision each shall share
As much of glory as his soul can bear ;
So did she love, and so dispense her care.
Her eldest thus, by consequence, was best,
As longer cultivated than the rest.
The babe had all that infant care beguiles,
And early knew his mother in her smiles :
But when dilated organs let in day
To the young soul, and gave it room to play,
At his first aptness, the maternal love
Those rudiments of reason did improve :
The tender age was pliant to command ;
Like wax it yielded to the forming hand :

True to the artificer, the laboured mind
With ease was pious, generous, just, and kind ;
Soft for impression, from the first prepared,
'Till virtue with long exercise grew hard :
With every act confirmed, and made at last
So durable as not to be effaced,
It turned to habit ; and, from vices free,
Goodness resolved into necessity.

Thus fixed the virtue's image, (that's her own,)
'Till the whole mother in the children shone ;
For that was their perfection ; she was such,
They never could express her mind too much.
So unexhausted her perfections were,
That, for more children, she had more to spare ;
For souls unborn, whom her untimely death
Deprived of bodies, and of mortal breath ;
And, could they take the impressions of her mind,
Enough still left to sanctify her kind.

Then wonder not to see this soul extend
The bounds, and seek some other self, a friend :
As swelling seas to gentle rivers glide,
To seek repose, and empty out the tide ;
So this full soul, in narrow limits pent,
Unable to contain her, sought a vent
To issue out, and in some friendly breast
Discharge her treasures, and securely rest :
To unbosom all the secrets of her heart,
Take good advice, but better to impart.
For 'tis the bliss of friendship's holy state,
To mix their minds, and to communicate ;
Though bodies cannot, souls can penetrate :
Fixed to her choice, inviolably true,
And wisely choosing, for she chose but few.
Some she must have ; but in no one could find
A tally fitted for so large a mind.

The souls of friends like kings in progress are ;
Still in their own, though from the palace far :

Thus her friend's heart her country dwelling was,
A sweet retirement to a coarser place;
Where pomp and ceremonies entered not,
Where greatness was shut out, and business well forgot.

This is the imperfect draught; but short as far
As the true height and bigness of a star
Exceeds the measures of the astronomer,
She shines above, we know; but in what place,
How near the throne, and Heaven's imperial face,
By our weak optics is but vainly guessed;
Distance and altitude conceal the rest.

Though all these rare endowments of the mind
Were in a narrow space of life confined,
The figure was with full perfection crowned;
Though not so large an orb, as truly round.

As when in glory, through the public place,
The spoils of conquered nations were to pass,
And but one day for triumph was allowed,
The consul was constrained his pomp to crowd;
And so the swift procession hurried on,
That all, though not distinctly, might be shewn:
So, in the straitened bounds of life confined,
She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind;
And multitudes of virtues passed along,
Each pressing foremost in the mighty throng,
Ambitious to be seen, and then make room
For greater multitudes that were to come.

Yet unemployed no minute slipped away;
Moments were precious in so short a stay.
The haste of Heaven to have her was so great,
That some were single acts, though each complete;
But every act stood ready to repeat.

Her fellow saints with busy care will look
For her blest name in fate's eternal book;
And, pleased to be outdone, with joy will see
Numberless virtues, endless charity:
But more will wonder at so short an age,
To find a blank beyond the thirtieth page;

And with a pious fear begin to doubt
The piece imperfect, and the rest torn out.
But 'twas her Saviour's time; and, could there be
A copy near the original, 'twas she.

As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire:
So was she soon exhaled, and vanished hence;
A short sweet odour, of a vast expense.
She vanished, we can scarcely say she died;
For but a-now did heaven and earth divide:
She passed serenely with a single breath;
This moment perfect health, the next was death:
One sigh did her eternal bliss assure;
So little penance needs, when souls are almost pure.
As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue,
Or, one dream passed, we slide into a new;
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep;
So softly death succeeded life in her,
She did but dream of heaven, and she was there.

No pains she suffered, nor expired with noise;
Her soul was whispered out with God's still voice;
As an old friend is beckoned to a feast,
And treated like a long familiar guest.
He took her as he found, but found her so,
As one in hourly readiness to go;
Even on that day, in all her trim prepared,
As early notice she from heaven had heard,
And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove;
Or counselled her to dress the nuptial room,
For on that night the bridegroom was to come.
He kept his hour, and found her where she lay
Clothed all in white, the livery of the day;
Scarce had she sinned in thought, or word, or act;
Unless omissions were to pass for fact;
That hardly death a consequence could draw,
To make her liable to nature's law.

And, that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below;
The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went,
Looked like translation through the firmament,
Or, like the fiery car on the third errand sent.

O happy soul! if thou canst view from high,
Where thou art all intelligence, all eye,
If looking up to God, or down to us,
Thou findest that any way be pervious,
Survey the ruins of thy house, and see
Thy widowed, and thy orphan family;
Look on thy tender pledges left behind;
And, if thou canst a vacant minute find
From heavenly joys, that interval afford
To thy sad children, and thy mourning lord.
See how they grieve, mistaken in their love,
And shed a beam of comfort from above;
Give them, as much as mortal eyes can bear,
A transient view of thy full glories there;
That they with moderate sorrow may sustain
And mollify their losses in thy gain.
Or else divide the grief; for such thou wert,
That should not all relations bear a part,
It were enough to break a single heart.

Let this suffice: nor thou, great saint, refuse
This humble tribute of no vulgar muse:
Who, not by cares, or wants, or age deprest,
Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast;
And dares to sing thy praises in a clime
Where vice triumphs, and virtue is a crime;
Where even to draw the picture of thy mind,
Is satire on the most of human kind:
Take it, while yet 'tis praise; before my rage,
Unsafely just, break loose on this bad age;
So bad, that thou thyself hadst no defence
From vice, but barely by departing hence.

Be what, and where thou art: to wish thy place,
Were, in the best, presumption more than grace.

Thy relics (such thy works of mercy are)
 Have, in this poem, been my holy care.
 As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky,
 So shall this verse preserve thy memory;
 For thou shalt make it live, because it sings of thee.

TO MR. SOUTHERNE,

ON HIS COMEDY, CALLED 'THE WIVES' EXCUSE.'

[If Southerne was not very happy in his comedies, he was abundantly compensated for the unfavourable verdicts of his audiences by being able to combine in his garland of panegyrics tributes from Dryden and Pope. The *Wives' Excuse*, upon which Dryden addressed these lines to him, failed in the representation. There is no difficulty in tracing the cause of the failure. The scenes are flat and insipid—the humour is dreary and languid—and the plot a dull reflection of grossness which at that time, 1692, had become stale and exhausted.]

SURE there's a fate in plays, and 'tis in vain
 To write while these malignant planets reign.
 Some very foolish influence rules the pit,
 Not always kind to sense, or just to wit;
 And whilst it lasts, let buffoonery succeed,
 To make us laugh; for never was more need.
 Farce, in itself, is of a nasty scent;
 But the gain smells not of the excrement.
 The Spanish nymph, a wit and beauty too,
 With all her charms, bore but a single show;
 But let a monster Muscovite appear,
 He draws a crowded audience round the year.
 May be thou hast not pleased the box and pit;
 Yet those who blame thy tale applaud thy wit;
 So Terence plotted, but so Terence writ.
 Like his, thy thoughts are true, thy language clean;
 Even lewdness is made moral in thy scene.

The hearers may for want of Nokes repine ;
 But rest secure, the readers will be thine.
 Nor was thy laboured drama damned or hissed,
 But with a kind civility dismissed ;
 With such good manners, as the Wife did use
 Who, not accepting, did but just refuse.
 There was a glance at parting ; such a look,
 As bids thee not give o'er, for one rebuke.
 But if thou wouldst be seen, as well as read,
 Copy one living author, and one dead :
 The standard of thy style let *Etherege* be ;
 For wit, the immortal spring of *Wycherly*.
 Learn, after both, to draw some just design,
 And the next age will learn to copy thine.

TO HENRY HIGDEN, ESQ.,

ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

[MR. HIGDEN was a member of the Inner Temple, who wrote a bad comedy, which was hissed off the stage. We learn from Dryden's lines that he also translated the tenth satire of *Juvenal*, which Scott conjectures must have appeared before Dryden published his own version. The lines, therefore, probably belong to this period—about 1692.]

THE Grecian wits, who Satire first began,
 Were pleasant Pasquins on the life of man ;
 At mighty villains, who the state oppressed,
 They durst not rail, perhaps ; they lashed, at least,
 And turned them out of office with a jest.
 No fool could peep abroad, but ready stand
 The drolls to clap a bauble in his hand.
 Wise legislators never yet could draw
 A fop within the reach of common law ;

For posture, dress, grimace, and affectation,
Though foes to sense, are harmless to the nation.
Our last redress is dint of verse to try,
And Satire is our court of Chancery.
This way took Horace to reform an age,
Not bad enough to need an author's rage:
But yours, who lived in more degenerate times,
Was forced to fasten deep, and worry crimes.
Yet you, my friend, have tempered him so well,
You make him smile in spite of all his zeal:
An art peculiar to yourself alone,
To join the virtues of two styles in one.

Oh! were your author's principle received,
Half of the labouring world would be relieved;
For not to wish is not to be deceived.
Revenge would into charity be changed,
Because it costs too dear to be revenged;
It costs our quiet and content of mind,
And when 'tis compassed leaves a sting behind.
Suppose I had the better end of the staff,
Why should I help the ill-natured world to laugh?
'Tis all alike to them, who get the day;
They love the spite and mischief of the fray.
No; I have cured myself of that disease;
Nor will I be provoked, but when I please:
But let me half that cure to you restore;
You gave the salve, I laid it to the sore.

Our kind relief against a rainy day,
Beyond a tavern, or a tedious play,
We take your book, and laugh our spleen away.
If all your tribe, too studious of debate,
Would cease false hopes and titles to create,
Led by the rare example you begun,
Clients would fail, and lawyers be undone.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND, MR. CONGREVE.

ON HIS COMEDY, CALLED 'THE DOUBLE DEALER.'

[*The Double Dealer* was acted in 1693. It was the second of Congreve's comedies, but not so successful as the first, although some people thought it better, and the queen went to see it. Congreve had written both these plays before he was twenty-six. Dryden was now feeling keenly the approaches of old age, although his mental powers were as vigorous as ever; and under this consciousness of his decline he turns to the young poet, and, hailing him as the successor of his fame, bequeaths to him the care of his reputation. The passage is inexpressibly affecting.]

WELL then, the promised hour is come at last,
 The present age of wit obscures the past:
 Strong were our sires, and as they fought they writ,
 Conquering with force of arms, and dint of wit:
 Theirs was the giant race, before the flood;
 And thus, when Charles returned, our empire stood.
 Like Janus, he the stubborn soil manured,
 With rules of husbandry the rankness cured;
 Tamed us to manners, when the stage was rude,
 And boisterous English wit with art endued.
 Our age was cultivated thus at length;
 But what we gained in skill we lost in strength.
 Our builders were with want of genius curst;
 The second temple was not like the first;
 Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at length;
 Our beauties equal, but excel our strength.
 Firm Doric pillars found your solid base;
 The fair Corinthian crowns the higher space:
 Thus all below is strength, and all above is grace.
 In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise;
 He moved the mind, but had not power to raise.

Great Jonson did by strength of judgment please;
 Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he wants his ease.
 In differing talents both adorned their age;
 One for the study, the other for the stage.
 But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
 One matched in judgment, both o'ermatched in wit.
 In him all beauties of this age we see,
 Etherege his courtship, Southerne's purity,
 The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherly.
 All this in blooming youth you have achieved;
 Nor are your foiled contemporaries grieved.
 So much the sweetness of your manners move,
 We cannot envy you, because we love.
 Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw
 A beardless consul made against the law,
 And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome;
 Though he with Hannibal was overcome.
 Thus old Romano bowed to Raphael's fame,
 And scholar to the youth he taught became.

O that your brows my laurel had sustained!
 Well had I been deposed, if you had reigned:
 The father had descended for the son;
 For only you are lineal to the throne.
 Thus, when the state one Edward did depose,
 A greater Edward in his room arose:
 But now, not I, but poetry is cursed;
 For Tom the second reigns like Tom the first.
 But let them not mistake my patron's part,
 Nor call his charity their own desert.
 Yet this I prophesy,—Thou shalt be seen,
 (Though with some short parenthesis between,)
 High on the throne of wit, and, seated there,
 Not mine—that's little—but thy laurel wear.
 Thy first attempt an early promise made;
 That early promise has this more than paid.
 So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,
 That your least praise is to be regular.

Time, place, and action, may with pains be wrought;
 But genius must be born, and never can be taught.
 This is your portion; this your native store;
 Heaven, that but once was prodigal before, [more.
 To Shakspeare gave as much; she could not give him
 Maintain your post: that's all the fame you need;
 For 'tis impossible you should proceed.
 Already I am worn with cares and age,
 And just abandoning the ungrateful stage:
 Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
 I live a rent-charge on his providence:
 But you, whom every muse and grace adorn,
 Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
 Be kind to my remains; and oh, defend,
 Against your judgment, your departed friend!
 Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
 But shade those laurels which descend to you:
 And take for tribute what these lines express;
 You merit more, nor could my love do less.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE, IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

[A LONG interval elapsed between the publication of the *Britannia Rediviva* and this celebrated Ode, which was written for the anniversary of St. Cecilia, in 1697. In the meanwhile, some reverses had happened to Dryden, and important changes had taken place in his pursuits. In August, 1689, he had been deprived by the Revolution of his offices of Poet Laureate and Historiographer, which were bestowed on his ancient adversary, Shadwell. By this deprivation he lost £300 a year. Necessity now compelled him, after an absence of four or five years from the stage, to turn to it again; and within the succeeding five years he produced five plays. His last play, *Love Triumphant*, with which he

took his final leave of the theatre, was brought out in 1694. In the summer of that year he commenced his translation of *Virgil*. Other translations, in prose and verse, were also undertaken during that period.

The Ode on *Alexander's Feast* was written at the solicitation of the stewards of the festival. Ill as Dryden could spare the abstraction of his thoughts from the labours on which he was employed, he appears to have engaged in it without any expectation of pecuniary advantage. The society, however, are said to have paid him £40 for it. The music was considered so unworthy of the poetry that it was never published; another composer attempted the task with no better success nearly twenty years later; and it was finally reserved for Handel to marry the immortal verse to a congenial strain.

Dr. Birch says that this Ode occupied Dryden a fortnight 'in composing and correcting it.' St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, says that it was written in a single night. He called on Dryden in the morning, and found him unusually agitated. 'I have been up all night,' said the old bard; 'my musical friends made me promise to write them an Ode for their feast of St. Cecilia, and I was so struck with the subject which occurred to me, that I could not leave it till I had completed it; here it is, *finished* at one sitting.' Sir Walter Scott seeks to reconcile these statements by supposing that Dryden may have completed the Ode at one sitting, and yet have employed a fortnight in correcting it. There is no necessity to resort to this solution. Every writer, who has the opportunity, corrects his works. In this case the probability is entirely on the side of Bolingbroke's anecdote, which has the advantage of being a direct testimony, while that of Birch is derived only at second-hand. Internal evidence also is in favour of the supposition that the Ode was written off at once without pause or break. It has all the suddenness, vehemence, and rapidity of an inspiration uttered, so to speak, in the moment of conception. That Dryden should have taken a fortnight to correct it is scarcely to be credited. That he re-touched it, as painters re-touch a finished picture, might

be assumed of this as of any other composition; but that he did not introduce any material alterations may be inferred from the curious discovery made by Dr. Johnson that there are some lines without corresponding rhymes, 'a defect,' he adds, 'which I never detected but after an acquaintance of many years, and which the enthusiasm of the writer might hinder him from perceiving.' It bears the evidence of this enthusiasm as clearly in its breadth and energy as in its negligence of rhyme; so that, upon the whole, we may consider ourselves fairly justified in concluding that it was the work of a single sitting; and this Ode, which, more than any other production of Dryden, displays those qualities of freshness, vigour, and eagerness, which are usually regarded as the characteristics of youth, was written in the 67th year of his age. The lines alluded to by Dr. Johnson will be found in the 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 6th stanzas.

Mr. Hallam dissents from the *dictum* which has pronounced this Ode the finest in our language. It would be difficult, however, to persuade the majority of readers to adopt this judgment. There is no work of Dryden so universally known, or so frequently repeated. Many of its lines have passed into household words, and are familiarly quoted by thousands of people ignorant of their source. The great popularity of the poem may be referred to the simplicity and obviousness of its structure, and to that idiomatic strength and clearness of expression which strikes the understanding at once. It is, perhaps, little to the purpose, but worth preserving amongst the memorabilia connected with it, that Dryden himself esteemed it 'the best of all his poetry.']

I

'TWAS at the royal feast, for Persia won
 By Philip's warlike son:
 Aloft, in awful state,
 The godlike hero sate
 On his imperial throne;
 His valiant peers were placed around;

Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound:

(So should desert in arms be crowned.)

The lovely Thais, by his side,

Sate like a blooming Eastern bride,

In flower of youth and beauty's pride.

Happy, happy, happy pair!

None but the brave,

None but the brave,

None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair!

None but the brave,

None but the brave,

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2

Timotheus, placed on high

Amid the tuneful quire,

With flying fingers touched the lyre:

The trembling notes ascend the sky,

And heavenly joys inspire.

The song began from Jove,

Who left his blissful seats above,

(Such is the power of mighty love.)

A dragon's fiery form belied the god:

Sublime on radiant spires he rode,

When he to fair Olympia pressed:

And while he sought her snowy breast:

Then, round her slender waist he curled, [world.

And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the

The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,

A present deity, they shout around;

A present deity, the vaulted roofs rebound:

With ravished ears

The monarch hears,

Assumes the god,

Affects to nod,

And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.

3

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
 Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
 The jolly god in triumph comes;
 Sound the trumpets; beat the drums;
 Flushed with a purple grace
 He shows his honest face:
 Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
 Bacchus, ever fair and young,
 Drinking joys did first ordain;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

4

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
 Fought all his battles o'er again; [the slain.
 And thrice he routed all his foes; and thrice he slew
 The master saw the madness rise,
 His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
 And while he heaven and earth defied,
 Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
 He chose a mournful muse,
 Soft pity to infuse;

He sung Darius great and good,
 By too severe a fate,
 Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
 Fallen from his high estate,
 And weltering in his blood;
 Deserted at his utmost need,
 By those his former bounty fed;
 On the bare earth exposed he lies,
 With not a friend to close his eyes.
 With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
 Revolving in his altered soul
 The various turns of chance below;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
 And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his altered soul
 The various turns of chance below;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
 And tears began to flow.

5

The mighty master smiled, to see
 That love was in the next degree;
 'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
 For pity melts the mind to love.
 Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
 Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
 War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
 Honour, but an empty bubble;
 Never ending, still beginning,
 Fighting still, and still destroying:
 If the world be worth thy winning
 Think, O think it worth enjoying:
 Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
 Take the good the gods provide thee.
 The many rend the skies with loud applause;
 So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
 Gazed on the fair
 Who caused his care,
 And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
 At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

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6

Now strike the golden lyre again;
 A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
 Break his bands of sleep asunder,
 And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
 Hark, hark, the horrid sound
 Has raised up his head;
 As awaked from the dead,
 And amazed, he stares around.
 Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
 See the Furies arise;
 See the snakes that they rear,
 How they hiss in their hair,
 And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
 Behold a ghastly band,
 Each a torch in his hand!
 Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
 And unburied remain
 Inglorious on the plain:
 Give the vengeance due
 To the valiant crew.

Behold how they toss their torches on high,
 How they point to the Persian abodes,
 And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
 The princes applaud with a furious joy ;
 And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy ;
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey,
 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS.

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy ;
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey,
 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

7

Thus long ago,
 Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
 While organs yet were mute,
 Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
 And sounding lyre,
 Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
 At last divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame ;
 The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown :
 He raised a mortal to the skies ;
 She drew an angel down.*

* Dr. Johnson has a singular remark on this stanza. ' The conclusion,' he says, ' is vicious ; the music of Timotheus, which ' raised a mortal to the skies,' had only a metaphorical power ; that of Cecilia, which ' drew an angel down,' had a real effect ; the crown, therefore, could not reasonably be divided.' Whoever believes that St. Cecilia ' drew an angel down,' will admit the validity of this criticism ; but as that is a matter of faith, and not a matter of fact, the criticism must be regarded as a waste of ingenuity. Dryden, who was no more bound

GRAND CHORUS.

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TO MR. GRANVILLE,

ON HIS EXCELLENT TRAGEDY, CALLED 'HEROIC LOVE.'

[THE date of *Heroic Love* is 1698. Mr. Granville is better known as Lord Lansdowne. He was a man of taste, but Dryden's panegyric upon his poetical merits is pure hyperbole. So far from being 'copied' from Homer, the tragedy detracts widely from the original in the principal characters, especially that of Agamemnon, while the mixture of Latin and Greek names, and the profound bathos of the dialogue, remove it to a still greater distance from its source. It is painful to find Dryden transferring to the author of a piece of dramatic fustian the same laurels which four or five years before he had hung upon the brows of Congreve. Some lines in this epistle indicate the decadence into which the stage of the Restoration was already declining, and which was in a great measure to be ascribed to Collier's exposition of its vices. Not long after the publication of his book, several informations were laid against the players by the society for the

to put implicit faith in the Church legends than in the fables of the Pantheon, could hardly have believed it, or he would not have invoked the comparison. Dr. Johnson certainly did not believe it. What, then, becomes of this subtle antithesis? Surely the 'mortal' of Timotheus is quite as real as the 'angel' of St. Cecilia.

reformation of manners, to recover penalties for expressions *contra bonos mores* uttered on the stage. Informers used to be placed in the pit and other parts of the house, to note down the words spoken. This persecution was finally stopped by Queen Anne.]

A USPICIOUS poet, wert thou not my friend,
 How could I envy, what I must commend!
 But since 'tis nature's law in love and wit,
 That youth should reign, and withering age submit,
 With less regret those laurels I resign,
 Which, dying on my brows, revive on thine.
 With better grace an ancient chief may yield
 The long contended honours of the field,
 Than venture all his fortune at a cast,
 And fight, like Hannibal, to lose at last.
 Young princes, obstinate to win the prize,
 Though yearly beaten, yearly yet they rise:
 Old monarchs, though successful, still in doubt,
 Catch at a peace, and wisely turn devout.
 Thine be the laurel then; thy blooming age
 Can best, if any can, support the stage;
 Which so declines, that shortly we may see
 Players and plays reduced to second infancy:
 Sharp to the world, but thoughtless of renown,
 They plot not on the stage, but on the town,
 And, in despair their empty pit to fill,
 Set up some foreign monster in a bill.
 Thus they jog on, still tricking, never thriving,
 And murdering plays, which they miscall reviving.
 Our sense is nonsense, through their pipes conveyed;
 Scarce can a poet know the play he made,
 'Tis so disguised in death; nor thinks 'tis he
 That suffers in the mangled tragedy.
 Thus Itys first was killed, and after dressed
 For his own sire, the chief invited guest.
 I say not this of thy successful scenes,
 Where thine was all the glory, theirs the gains.

With length of time, much judgment, and more toil,
 Not ill they acted, what they could not spoil.
 Their setting sun still shoots a glimmering ray,
 Like ancient Rome, majestic in decay;
 And better gleanings their worn soil can boast,
 Than the crab-vintage of the neighbouring coast.
 This difference yet the judging world will see;
 Thou copiest Homer, and they copy thee.

TO MY FRIEND, MR. MOTTEUX,

ON HIS TRAGEDY, CALLED 'BEAUTY IN DISTRESS.'

[MOTTEUX, (a French Huguenot who came to England on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes,) is known to modern readers as the translator of *Don Quixote*; but he was also a somewhat prolific writer of plays, which are now forgotten. The tragedy that procured this encomium seems to have been imitated from the Spanish, and is full of complicated incidents unskillfully developed. Dryden notices this peculiarity, from which, however, he manages to extract a compliment, by contrasting it with the 'thin' plots of the French drama,—at that time under the rigorous government of the unities. The remarkable point in Motteux' tragedy is, that, notwithstanding the confused and crowded imbroglio, he strictly maintains the unities of time and place, the scene never changing throughout, and the acting occupying only three hours. Motteux deserved the tribute paid to his English writings. He mastered so completely the idiom of our language, that we should find it difficult to detect in his graceful little poems a trace of the 'foreign guest.' In this piece Dryden alludes to the strictures of Collier, and their blighting effect upon the theatre; but, to a certain extent, admits their justice.]

'TIS hard, my friend, to write in such an age,
 As damns, not only poets, but the stage.
 That sacred art, by heaven itself infused,
 Which Moses, David, Solomon have used,

Is now to be no more: the Muses' foes
Would sink their Maker's praises into prose.
Were they content to prune the lavish vine
Of straggling branches, and improve the wine,
Who, but a madman, would his thoughts defend?
All would submit; for all but fools will mend.
But when to common sense they give the lie,
And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
They give the scandal; and the wise discern,
Their glosses teach an age, too apt to learn.
What I have loosely, or profanely, writ,
Let them to fires, their due desert, commit.
Nor, when accused by me, let them complain,
Their faults, and not their function, I arraign.
Rebellion, worse than witchcraft, they pursued;
The pulpit preached the crime, the people rued.
The stage was silenced; for the saints would see
In fields performed their plotted tragedy.
But let us first reform, and then so live,
That we may teach our teachers to forgive;
Our desk be placed below their lofty chairs;
Ours be the practice, as the precept theirs.
The moral part, at least we may divide,
Humility reward, and punish pride;
Ambition, interest, avarice, accuse;
These are the province of a tragic muse.
These hast thou chosen; and the public voice
Has equalled thy performance with thy choice.
Time, action, place, are so preserved by thee,
That even Cornéille might with envy see
The alliance of his tripled Unity.
Thy incidents, perhaps, too thick are sown;
But too much plenty is thy fault alone;
At least but two can that good crime commit,
Thou in design, and Wycherly in wit.
Let thy own Gauls condemn thee, if they dare;
Contented to be thinly regular:

Born there, but not for them, our fruitful soil
 With more increase rewards thy happy toil.
 Their tongue, enfeebled, is refined too much ;
 And, like pure gold, it bends at every touch :
 Our sturdy Teuton yet will art obey,
 More fit for manly thought, and strengthened with alloy.
 But whence art thou inspired, and thou alone,
 To flourish in an idiom not thy own ?
 It moves our wonder, that a foreign guest
 Should over-match the most, and match the best.
 In under-praising thy deserts, I wrong ;
 Here find the first deficiency of our tongue :
 Words, once my stock, are wanting, to commend
 So great a poet, and so good a friend.

TO SIR GODFREY KNELLER,

PRINCIPAL PAINTER TO HIS MAJESTY.

[THERE is no date affixed to these lines. Sir Walter Scott conjectures that they were addressed to Kneller, (to whom a whole galaxy of poets tendered their homage) as an acknowledgment for the copy of the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare alluded to in the course of them. He adds, 'there is great luxuriance and richness of idea and imagery in the epistle.' The most striking point in these lines is the noble tribute Dryden here pays to Shakespeare, whose portrait, he says, he will place before him, asking a blessing before he writes—'proud to be less, but of his godlike race.' Kneller's copy of the Chandos portrait is now in the possession of Earl Fitzwilliam.]

ONCE I beheld the fairest of her kind,
 And still the sweet idea charms my mind :
 True, she was dumb ; for nature gazed so long,
 Pleased with her work, that she forgot her tongue :
 But, smiling, said—'She still shall gain the prize ;
 I only have transferred it to her eyes.'

Such are thy pictures, Kneller, such thy skill,
That nature seems obedient to thy will;
Comes out, and meets thy pencil in the draught,
Lives there, and wants but words to speak her thought.
At least thy pictures look a voice; and we
Imagine sounds, deceived to that degree,
We think 'tis somewhat more than just to see.

Shadows are but privations of the light;
Yet, when we walk, they shoot before the sight;
With us approach, retire, arise, and fall;
Nothing themselves, and yet expressing all.
Such are thy pieces, imitating life
So near, they almost conquer in the strife;
And from their animated canvass came,
Demanding souls, and loosened from the frame.

Prometheus, were he here, would cast away
His Adam, and refuse a soul to clay;
And either would thy noble work inspire,
Or think it warm enough, without his fire.

But vulgar hands may vulgar likeness raise;
This is the least attendant on thy praise:
From hence the rudiments of art began;
A coal, or chalk, first imitated man:
Perhaps the shadow taken on a wall,
Gave outlines to the rude original;
Ere canvass yet was strained, before the grace
Of blended colours found their use and place,
Or cypress tablets first received a face.

By slow degrees the godlike art advanced;
As man grew polished, picture was enhanced:
Greece added posture, shade, and perspective,
And then the mimic piece began to live.
Yet perspective was lame, no distance true,
But all came forward in one common view:
No point of light was known, no bounds of art;
When light was there, it knew not to depart,
But glaring on remoter objects played;
Not languished, and insensibly decayed.

Rome raised not art, but barely kept alive,
And with old Greece unequally did strive :
Till Goths, and Vandals, a rude northern race,
Did all the matchless monuments deface.
Then all the Muses in one ruin lie,
And rhyme began to enervate poetry.
Thus, in a stupid military state,
The pen and pencil find an equal fate.
Flat faces, such as would disgrace a screen,
Such as in Bantam's embassy were seen,
Unraised, unrounded, were the rude delight
Of brutal nations, only born to fight.

Long time the sister arts, in iron sleep,
A heavy sabbath did supinely keep ;
At length, in Raphael's age, at once they rise,
Stretch all their limbs, and open all their eyes.

Thence rose the Roman, and the Lombard line ;
One coloured best, and one did best design.
Raphael's, like Homer's, was the nobler part,
But Titian's painting looked like Virgil's art.

Thy genius gives thee both ; where true design,
Postures unforced, and lively colours join,
Likeness is ever there ; but still the best,
Like proper thoughts in lofty language drest,
Where light, to shades descending, plays, not strives,
Dies by degrees, and by degrees revives.
Of various parts a perfect whole is wrought ;
Thy pictures think, and we divine their thought.

Shakespeare, thy gift, I place before my sight ;
With awe, I ask his blessing ere I write ;
With reverence look on his majestic face ;
Proud to be less, but of his godlike race.
His soul inspires me, while thy praise I write,
And I, like Teucer, under Ajax fight ;
Bids thee, through me, be bold ; with dauntless breast
Contemn the bad, and emulate the best.
Like his, thy critics in the attempt are lost :
When most they rail, know then, they envy most.

In vain they snarl aloof; a noisy crowd,
Like women's anger, impotent and loud.
While they their barren industry deplore,
Pass on secure, and mind the goal before.
Old as she is, my Muse shall march behind,
Bear off the blast, and intercept the wind.
Our arts are sisters, though not twins in birth,
For hymns were sung in Eden's happy earth;
But oh, the painter Muse, though last in place,
Has seized the blessing first, like Jacob's race.
Apelles' art an Alexander found;
And Raphael did with Leo's gold abound;
But Homer was with barren laurel crowned.
Thou hadst thy Charles a while, and so had I;
But pass we that unpleasing image by.
Rich in thyself, and of thyself divine,
All pilgrims come and offer at thy shrine.
A graceful truth thy pencil can command;
The fair themselves go mended from thy hand.
Likeness appears in every lineament;
But likeness in thy work is eloquent.
Though nature there her true resemblance bears,
A nobler beauty in thy piece appears.
So warm thy work, so glows the generous frame,
Flesh looks less living in the lovely dame.
Thou paint'st as we describe, improving still,
When on wild nature we engraft our skill,
But not creating beauties at our will.
But poets are confined in narrower space,
To speak the language of their native place;
The painter widely stretches his command;
Thy pencil speaks the tongue of every land.
From hence, my friend, all climates are your own,
Nor can you forfeit, for you hold of none.
All nations all immunities will give
To make you theirs, where'er you please to live;
And not seven cities, but the world, would strive.

Sure some propitious planet then did smile,
When first you were conducted to this isle;
Our genius brought you here, to enlarge our fame;
For your good stars are everywhere the same.
Thy matchless hand, of every region free,
Adopts our climate, not our climate thee.

Great Rome and Venice early did impart
To thee the examples of their wondrous art.
Those masters, then but seen, not understood,
With generous emulation fired thy blood;
For what in nature's dawn the child admired,
The youth endeavoured, and the man acquired.

If yet thou hast not reached their high degree,
'Tis only wanting to this age, not thee.
Thy genius, bounded by the times, like mine,
Drudges on petty draughts, nor dare design
A more exalted work, and more divine.
For what a song, or senseless opera
Is to the living labour of a play;
Or what a play to Virgil's work would be,
Such is a single piece to history.

But we, who life bestow, ourselves must live:
Kings cannot reign, unless their subjects give;
And they, who pay the taxes, bear the rule:
Thus thou, sometimes, art forced to draw a fool;
But so his follies in thy posture sink,
The senseless idiot seems at last to think.
Good heaven! that sots and knaves should be so vain,
To wish their vile resemblance may remain,
And stand recorded at their own request,
To future days, a libel or a jest!

Else should we see your noble pencil trace
Our unities of action, time, and place;
A whole composed of parts, and those the best,
With every various character exprest;
Heroes at large, and at a nearer view;
Less, and at distance, an ignobler crew;

While all the figures in one action join,
As tending to complete the main design.

More cannot be by mortal art exprest ;
But venerable age shall add the rest :
For time shall with his ready pencil stand,
Retouch your figures with his ripening hand,
Mellow your colours, and imbrown the tint,
Add every grace, which time alone can grant ;
To future ages shall your fame convey,
And give more beauties than he takes away.

TO MY HONOURED KINSMAN, JOHN DRIDEN,

OF CHESTERTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTINGDON, ESQ.

[JOHN DRIDEN, who retained the ancient orthography, was the second son of Sir John Driden, and cousin of the poet ; a country gentleman of independent fortune, a magistrate, and member of parliament, who followed the hounds, kept a hospitable table, and lived a bachelor. So easy and prosperous a destiny naturally enough attracted the admiration of the hard-working author, shut up in the smoke and din of the town, in his house in Gerard-street, Soho. Dryden had ample materials to build his panegyric upon, in the happy circumstances and unblemished reputation of his cousin, at whose house, in the latter part of his life, he frequently received a hearty welcome, which in these brilliant lines he gracefully repays. Malone says that there was a tradition in the family that the poet was presented by his kinsman with a gift of £500 in return for these verses ; but he doubts the accuracy of the anecdote, as being inconsistent with the distressed circumstances in which Dryden continued to be involved from that time up to his death, which took place soon afterwards. Sir Walter Scott thinks it probable that this sum of £500 was confounded with a legacy

of the same amount which Mr. Driden of Chesterton bequeathed to Charles Dryden, the poet's son, who, unfortunately, did not live to profit by it. It is certain, however, that the poem was acknowledged by a handsome gift, as Dryden, in a letter to Mrs. Steward, dated 11th April, 1700, thus refers to the circumstance, alluding to the recent publication of the volume containing this piece: 'I always thought my verses to my cousin Driden were the best of the whole, and, to my comfort, the town thinks them so; and he, which pleases me most, is of the same judgment, as appears by a noble present he has sent me, which surprised me, because I did not in the least expect it.'

Dryden bestowed extraordinary pains upon this poem, which is the more remarkable, as he rarely revised his writings. He tells us that the portrait of a Parliament-man is a memorial of his own principles. This epistle, written in 1699, was published for the first time in the volume with the Fables.]

HOW blessed is he, who leads a country life,
Unvexed with anxious cares, and void of strife!
Who, studying peace, and shunning civil rage,
Enjoyed his youth, and now enjoys his age:
All who deserve his love, he makes his own;
And, to be loved himself, needs only to be known.

Just, good, and wise, contending neighbours come,
From your award to wait their final doom;
And, foes before, return in friendship home.
Without their cost, you terminate the cause,
And save the expense of long litigious laws;
Where suits are traversed, and so little won,
That he who conquers, is but last undone.
Such are not your decrees; but so designed,
The sanction leaves a lasting peace behind;
Like your own soul serene, a pattern of your mind.

Promoting concord, and composing strife,
Lord of yourself, uncumbered with a wife;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence succeeds a short delight:

Minds are so hardly matched, that even the first,
Though paired by Heaven, in Paradise were cursed.
For man and woman, though in one they grow,
Yet, first or last, return again to two.
He to God's image, she to his was made;
So, farther from the fount the stream at random strayed.

How could he stand, when, put to double pain,
He must a weaker than himself sustain!
Each might have stood perhaps, but each alone;
Two wrestlers help to pull each other down.

Not that my verse would blemish all the fair;
But yet, if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware,
And better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare.
Thus have you shunned, and shun the married state,
Trusting as little as you can to fate.

No porter guards the passage of your door,
To admit the wealthy, and exclude the poor;
For God, who gave the riches, gave the heart
To sanctify the whole, by giving part;
Heaven, who foresaw the will, the means has wrought,
And to the second son a blessing brought;
The first-begotten had his father's share;
But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.

So may your stores and fruitful fields increase;
And ever be you blessed, who live to bless.
As Ceres sowed where'er her chariot flew;
As Heaven in deserts rained the bread of dew;
So free to many, to relations most,
You feed with manna your own Israel host.

With crowds attended of your ancient race,
You seek the champion sports, or sylvan chace;
With well-breathed beagles you surround the wood,
Even then, industrious of the common good;
And often have you brought the wily fox
To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks;
Chased even amid the folds, and made to bleed,
Like felons, where they did the murderous deed.

This fiery game your active youth maintained;
 Not yet by years extinguished, though restrained:
 You season still with sports your serious hours;
 For age but tastes of pleasures, youth devours.
 The hare in pastures or in plains is found,
 Emblem of human life; who runs the round,
 And, after all his wandering ways are done,
 His circle fills, and ends where he begun,
 Just as the setting meets the rising sun.

Thus princes ease their cares; but happier he,
 Who seeks not pleasure through necessity;
 Than such as once on slippery thrones were placed;
 And chasing, sigh to think themselves are chased.

So lived our sires, ere doctors learned to kill,
 And multiplied with theirs the weekly bill.
 The first physicians by debauch were made;
 Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.
 Pity the generous kind their cares bestow
 To search forbidden truths, (a sin to know,)
 To which if human science could attain,
 The doom of death, pronounced by God, were vain.
 In vain the leech would interpose delay;
 Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey.
 What help from art's endeavours can we have?
 Gibbons but guesses, nor is sure to save;* [grave; †
 But Maurus sweeps whole parishes, and peoples every

* Dryden records his obligations to this gentleman, and to Dr. Hobbs, in his Postscript to Virgil, where he says he owes the recovery of his health, lost by his application to that work, 'next to God's mercy, to the skill and care of Dr. Gibbons and Dr. Hobbs;' adding, 'the whole faculty has always been ready to oblige me.' The obligations of literature to the enlightened sympathy and consoling friendship of the medical profession, are interwoven with every page of its history; and are represented in the present age by such men as Thomas Mayo, Southwood Smith, and Elliotson, as in former times by the Garths and Arbuthnots. Pope, whose tribute to Arbuthnot, so honourable to both, is familiar to all readers, records, nearly in Dryden's words, his own experience of the profession: 'There is no end of my kind treatment from the faculty. They are in general the most amiable companions, and the best friends, as well as most learned men I know.'

† Under the name of Maurus, Dryden again alludes to Sir Richard

And no more mercy to mankind will use,
 Than when he robbed and murdered Maro's muse.
 Wouldst thou be soon dispatched, and perish whole,
 Trust Maurus with thy life, and Milbourn with thy soul.

By chase our long-lived fathers earned their food;
 Toil strung the nerves, and purified the blood:
 But we their sons, a pampered race of men,
 Are dwindled down to threescore years and ten.
 Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
 Than see the doctor for a nauseous draught.
 The wise, for cure, on exercise depend;
 God never made his work for man to mend.

The tree of knowledge, once in Eden placed,
 Was easy found, but was forbid the taste;
 Oh, had our grandsire walked without his wife,
 He first had sought the better plant of life!
 Now both are lost: yet, wandering in the dark,
 Physicians, for the tree, have found the bark;
 They, labouring for relief of human kind,
 With sharpened sight some remedies may find;
 The apothecary-train is wholly blind;
 From files a random recipe they take,
 And many deaths of one prescription make.
 Garth, generous as his muse, prescribes and gives;†
 The shopman sells, and by destruction lives:

Blackmore, with a severity that has consigned that luckless individual to an immortality of contempt, in the Prologue to the *Pilgrim*. Whether Blackmore was as ignorant of his profession as Dryden represents him, we have no means of knowing; but there seems to be no doubt that he had a large practice, and devoted himself diligently to it. He tells us as much in his laborious prefaces.

* Milbourn is described in the notes on the old editions as a non-juring parson. Dryden hints elsewhere that he lost his living by writing libels on his parishioners. However that may be, it is certain that he and Blackmore did their best to deserve the chastisement Dryden inflicted on them, by the wanton and unprovoked attacks they published on his character, person, and opinions. They were clearly the aggressors.

† Garth, the author of the *Dispensary*, was a Whig, but neither political nor religious differences interfered with his friendship for

Ungrateful tribe! who, like the viper's brood,
From Medicine issuing, suck their mother's blood!
Let these obey, and let the learned prescribe,
That men may die, without a double bribe: *
Let them, but under their superiors, kill,
When doctors first have signed the bloody bill:
He 'scapes the best, who, nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields, in draughts of vital air.

You hoard not health for your own private use,
But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urged, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your loved retreat,
And sends to senates, charged with common care,
Which none more shuns, and none can better bear:
Where could they find another formed so fit,
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit?
Were these both wanting, as they both abound,
Where could so firm integrity be found?
Well born, and wealthy, wanting no support,
You steer betwixt the country and the court;
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor grudging give, what public needs require.
Part must be left, a fund when foes invade;
And part employed to roll the watery trade;
Even Canaan's happy land, when worn with toil,
Required a sabbath-year to mend the meagre soil.

Good senators (and such as you) so give,
That kings may be supplied, the people thrive;

Dryden, of which he gave an affecting proof in the Latin oration he delivered over the body of the poet in the theatre of the College of Physicians. Garth was the most loveable of men and physicians. His good-nature was proverbial amongst his contemporaries; yet that active benevolence which won the admiration of all the rest of the world, exposed him to the taunts and ridicule of some members of his own profession. The establishment of a gratuitous dispensary for the poor—alluded to in the text—drew upon him a variety of attacks from sordid physicians, who apprehended that the innovation would interfere with their profits. It is strange and painful to find the name of Dr. Gibbons amongst them.

And he, when want requires, is truly wise,
Who slights not foreign aids, nor over-buys,
But on our native strength, in time of need, relies.
Munster was bought, we boast not the success;
Who fights for gain, for greater makes his peace.
Our foes, compelled by need, have peace embraced;
The peace both parties want, is like to last;
Which if secure, securely we may trade;
Or, not secure, should never have been made.
Safe in ourselves, while on ourselves we stand,
The sea is ours, and that defends the land.
Be, then, the naval stores the nation's care,
New ships to build, and battered to repair.

Observe the war, in every annual course;
What has been done, was done with British force;
Namur subdued, is England's palm alone;
The rest besieged, but we constrained the town:
We saw the event that followed our success;
France, though pretending arms, pursued the peace,
Obliged, by one sole treaty, to restore
What twenty years of war had won before.
Enough for Europe has our Albion fought:
Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.
When once the Persian king was put to flight,
The weary Macedons refused to fight:
Themselves their own mortality confessed,
And left the son of Jove to quarrel for the rest.

Even victors are by victories undone;
Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
To Carthage was recalled, too late to keep his own.
While sore of battle, while our wounds are green,
Why should we tempt the doubtful dye again?
In wars renewed, uncertain of success;
Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.

A patriot both the king and country serves;
Prerogative and privilege preserves:
Of each our laws the certain limit show;
One must not ebb, nor the other overflow:

Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand ;
The barriers of the state on either hand :
May neither overflow, for then they drown the land.
When both are full, they feed our blessed abode ;
Like those that watered once the paradise of God.
Some overpoise of sway, by turns, they share ;
In peace the people, and the prince in war :
Consuls of moderate power in calms were made ;
When the Gauls came, one sole dictator swayed.

Patriots, in peace, assert the people's right ;
With noble stubbornness resisting might :
No lawless mandates from the court receive,
Nor lend by force, but in a body give.
Such was your generous grandsire ; free to grant
In parliaments, that weighed their prince's want :
But so tenacious of the common cause,
As not to lend the king against his laws ;
And, in a loathsome dungeon doomed to lie,
In bonds retained his birth-right liberty,
And shamed oppression, till it set him free.

Oh true descendant of a patriot line,
Who, while thou sharest their lustre, lendest them thine
Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see ;
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee ;
The beauties to the original I owe ;
Which when I miss, my own defects I show :
Nor think the kindred muses thy disgrace ;
A poet is not born in every race.
Two of a house few ages can afford,
One to perform, another to record.
Praiseworthy actions are by thee embraced ;
And 'tis my praise, to make thy praises last.
For even when death dissolves our human frame,
The soul returns to heaven from whence it came
Earth keeps the body, verse preserves the fame.

THE FABLES.

[PUBLISHED in March 1699-1700. With this publication we leave the region of polemics, and enter upon that of pure literature. In the first edition Dryden inserted the tales he had selected from Chaucer, so that the public might have the means of comparing them with his own version. Few readers of the present day would care to undertake so tedious a process, and would reap little profit from it if they did. Curiosity to see how Dryden had dealt with his great original would soon exhaust itself in the attempt to trace the points of contrast, the minute verbal variations, the occasional omissions, and sonorous amplifications by which the one is distinguished from the other. In general the text of Chaucer is carefully followed, his very words are sometimes adopted, nor is there anywhere any striking departure from the exact course of the narrative. The main differences will be found in the more flowing expression of Dryden, and in a certain rounding of the incidents, which have the effect of imparting increased fluency to the relation. The gain is in this fulness and sustained power; but it is obtained by some redundancy of treatment, and at no inconsiderable loss of the quaintness, the concise familiar turns, and lurking humour which render Chaucer so delightful. Whoever can read Chaucer with facility, will like him better in his original language; but by the multitude who cannot, the version of Dryden will always be preferred. Dryden may not in all instances have made the best selections; but it must be allowed that he has made a most popular and effective use of his materials.]

In the stories taken from Boccacio, he avails himself of a wider latitude; and if he improves upon the original, as in the story of *Theodore and Honoria*, by deepening the poetical interest, he sometimes injures its purity by coarse indulgence, as in that of *Sigismonda and Guiscardo*. There are passages of absorbing beauty in these tales; and throughout the whole

range of his multifarious writings (and he was now, as he says in the preface, in his sixty-ninth year) Dryden has nowhere reached the sweetness and voluptuous melody with which he here dwells on the charms of his heroine and the influence of love. The picture of the clown awakened to consciousness of life and manhood by the sight of the sleeping nymph in *Cymon and Iphigenia* is perfect in its kind. 'These Fables,' says Mr. Hallam, 'are at this day, probably, the most read and the most popular of Dryden's poems.' The proof of this popularity may be found in numerous lines and couplets which have long been as current amongst the people as proverbs.]

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ORMOND.

[THE Duke of Ormond was the second son of that Duke of Ormond celebrated by Dryden under the character of Barzillai in *Absalom and Achitophel*. The happy future which the poet desires for him in this dedication was destined not to be realized. Impeached of high treason at the accession of George I., he fled to Spain, where he died in 1746.]

Anno 1699.

MY LORD,—Some estates are held in England by paying a fine at the change of every lord. I have enjoyed the patronage of your family, from the time of your excellent grandfather to this present day. I have dedicated the translation of the lives of Plutarch to the first Duke; and have celebrated the memory of your heroic father. Though I am very short of the age of Nestor, yet I have lived to a third generation of your house; and by your Grace's favour am admitted still to hold from you by the same tenure.

I am not vain enough to boast that I have deserved the value of so illustrious a line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three descents they have been pleased to distinguish my poems from those of other men; and have, accordingly, made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to say, that as your grandfather and father were cherished and adorned with honours by two successive monarchs, so I have been esteemed and patronized by the grandfather, the father, and the son, descended from one

of the most ancient, most conspicuous, and most deserving families in Europe.

It is true, that by delaying the payment of my last fine, when it was due by your Grace's accession to the titles and patrimonies of your house, I may seem, in rigour of law, to have made a forfeiture of my claim; yet my heart has always been devoted to your service; and since you have been graciously pleased, by your permission of this address, to accept the tender of my duty, it is not yet too late to lay these volumes at your feet.

The world is sensible that you worthily succeed not only to the honours of your ancestors, but also to their virtues. The long chain of magnanimity, courage, easiness of access, and desire of doing good, even to the prejudice of your fortune, is so far from being broken in your Grace, that the precious metal yet runs pure to the newest link of it; which I will not call the last, because I hope and pray it may descend to late posterity; and your flourishing youth, and that of your excellent Duchess, are happy omens of my wish.

It is observed by Livy, and by others, that some of the noblest Roman families retained a resemblance of their ancestry, not only in their shapes and features, but also in their manners, their qualities, and the distinguishing characters of their minds. Some lines were noted for a stern, rigid virtue, savage, haughty, parsimonious, and unpopular: others were more sweet and affable, made of a more pliant paste, humble, courteous, and obliging; studious of doing charitable offices, and diffusive of the goods which they enjoyed. The last of these is the proper and indelible character of your Grace's family. God Almighty has endued you with a softness, a beneficence, an attractive behaviour winning on the hearts of others; and so sensible of their misery, that the wounds of fortune seem not inflicted on them, but on yourself. You are so ready to redress, that you almost prevent their wishes, and always exceed their expectations; as if what was yours was not your own, and not given you to possess, but to bestow on wanting merit. But this is a topic which I must cast in shades, lest I offend your modesty, which is so far from being ostentatious of the good you do, that it blushes even to have it known; and therefore I must leave you to the satisfaction and testimony of your own conscience, which though it be a silent panegyric, is yet the best.

You are so easy of access, that Poplicola was not more, whose doors were opened on the outside to save the people even the common civility of asking entrance; where all were equally

admitted; where nothing that was reasonable was denied; where misfortune was a powerful recommendation; and where (I can scarce forbear saying) that want itself was a powerful mediator, and was next to merit.

The history of Peru assures us, that their Incas, above all their titles, esteemed that the highest, which called them lovers of the poor: a name more glorious than the Felix, Pius, and Augustus of the Roman emperors; which were epithets of flattery, deserved by few of them; and not running in a blood like the perpetual gentleness, and inherent goodness of the Ormond family.

Gold, as it is the purest, so it is the softest and most ductile of all metals. Iron, which is the hardest, gathers rust, corrodes itself, and is therefore subject to corruption: it was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inscriptions of the great. Indeed it is fit for armour, to bear off insults, and preserve the wearer in the day of battle; but the danger once repelled, it is laid aside by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil conversation: a necessary guard in war, but too harsh and cumbersome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more humane life.

For this reason, my lord, though you have courage in an heroic degree, yet I ascribe it to you but as your second attribute: mercy, beneficence, and compassion, claim precedence, as they are first in the divine nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at best but a holiday kind of virtue, to be seldom exercised, and never but in cases of necessity; affability, mildness, tenderness, and a word, which I would fain bring back to its original signification of virtue, I mean good-nature, are of daily use: they are the bread of mankind, and staff of life: neither sighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curses of the vanquished, follow acts of compassion, and of charity: but a sincere pleasure and serenity of mind, in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot suffer the misfortunes of another without redress, lest they should bring a kind of contagion along with them, and pollute the happiness which he enjoys.

Yet since the perverse tempers of mankind, since oppression on one side, and ambition on the other, are sometimes the unavoidable occasions of war; that courage, that magnanimity, and resolution, which is born with you, cannot be too much commended: and here it grieves me that I am scantied in the pleasure of dwelling on many of your actions: but *αἰδέομαι Τρώας* is an expression which Tully often uses, when he would do what he dares not, and fears the censure of the Romans.

I have sometimes been forced to amplify on others; but here, where the subject is so fruitful that the harvest overcomes the reaper, I am shortened by my chain, and can only see what is forbidden me to reach: since it is not permitted me to commend you, according to the extent of my wishes, and much less is it in my power to make my commendations equal to your merits. Yet in this frugality of your praises, there are some things which I cannot omit, without detracting from your character. You have so formed your own education, as enables you to pay the debt you owe your country; or, more properly speaking, both your countries; because you were born, I may almost say, in purple, at the castle of Dublin, when your grandfather was lord-lieutenant, and have since been bred in the court of England.

If this address had been in verse, I might have called you, as Claudian calls Mercury, *Numen commune, gemino faciens commercia mundo*. The better to satisfy this double obligation, you have early cultivated the genius you have to arms, that when the service of Britain or Ireland shall require your courage and your conduct, you may exert them both to the benefit of either country. You began in the cabinet what you afterwards practised in the camp; and thus both Lucullus and Cæsar (to omit a crowd of shining Romans) formed themselves to war by the study of history, and by the examples of the greatest captains, both of Greece and Italy, before their time. I name those two commanders in particular, because they were better read in chronicle than any of the Roman leaders; and that Lucullus in particular, having only the theory of war from books, was thought fit, without practice, to be sent into the field against the most formidable enemy of Rome. Tully, indeed, was called the learned consul in derision; but then he was not born a soldier: his head was turned another way: when he read the *Tactics*, he was thinking on the bar, which was his field of battle. The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a general who dares not make use of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and resolution; in him it will direct his martial spirit, and teach him the way to the best victories, which are those that are least bloody, and which, though achieved by the hand, are managed by the head. Science distinguishes a man of honour from one of those athletic brutes whom undeservedly we call heroes. Cursed be the poet, who first honoured with that name a mere Ajax, a man-killing idiot. The Ulysses of Ovid upbraids his ignorance, that he understood not the shield for which he pleaded: there was engraven on it plans of cities,

and maps of countries, which Ajax could not comprehend, but looked on them as stupidly as his fellow-beast the lion. But on the other side, your Grace has given yourself the education of his rival; you have studied every spot of ground in Flanders, which for these ten years past has been the scene of battles and of sieges. No wonder if you performed your part with such applause on a theatre which you understood so well.

If I designed this for a poetical encomium, it were easy to enlarge on so copious a subject; but confining myself to the severity of truth, and to what is becoming me to say, I must not only pass over many instances of your military skill, but also those of your assiduous diligence in the war; and of your personal bravery, attended with an ardent thirst of honour; a long train of generosity; profuseness of doing good; a soul unsatisfied with all it has done; and an unextinguished desire of doing more. But all this is matter for your own historians; I am, as Virgil says, *Spatiis exclusus iniquis*.

Yet, not to be wholly silent of all your charities, I must stay a little on one action, which preferred the relief of others to the consideration of yourself. When, in the battle of Landen, your heat of courage (a fault only pardonable to your youth) had transported you so far before your friends, that they were unable to follow, much less to succour you; when you were not only dangerously, but, in all appearance, mortally wounded; when in that desperate condition you were made prisoner, and carried to Namur, at that time in possession of the French; then it was, my Lord, that you took a considerable part of what was remitted to you of your own revenues, and as a memorable instance of your heroic charity, put it into the hands of Count Guiscard, who was governor of the place, to be distributed among your fellow-prisoners. The French commander, charmed with the greatness of your soul, accordingly consigned it to the use for which it was intended by the donor; by which means the lives of so many miserable men were saved, and a comfortable provision made for their subsistence, who had otherwise perished, had not you been the companion of their misfortune; or rather sent by Providence, like another Joseph, to keep out famine from invading those, whom in humility you called your brethren. How happy was it for those poor creatures, that your Grace was made their fellow sufferer! And how glorious for you, that you chose to want, rather than not relieve the wants of others! The heathen poet, in commending the charity of Dido to the Trojans, spoke like a Christian: *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco*. All

men, even those of a different interest, and contrary principles, must praise this action, as the most eminent for piety, not only in this degenerate age, but almost in any of the former; when men were made *de meliore luto*; when examples of charity were frequent, and when they were in being,

*Teucris pulcherrima proles,
Magnanimi heroes nati melioribus annis.*

No envy can detract from this: it will shine in history; and, like swans, grow whiter the longer it endures; and the name of ORMOND will be more celebrated in his captivity, than in his greatest triumphs.

But all actions of your grace are of a piece; as waters keep the tenor of their fountains: your compassion is general, and has the same effect as well on enemies as friends. It is so much in your nature to do good, that your life is but one continued act of placing benefits on many, as the sun is always carrying his light to some part or other of the world. And were it not that your reason guides you where to give, I might almost say that you could not help bestowing more than is consistent with the fortune of a private man, or with the will of any but an Alexander.

What wonder is it then, that being born for a blessing to mankind, your supposed death in that engagement was so generally lamented through the nation? The concernment for it was as universal as the loss; and though the gratitude might be counterfeit in some, yet the tears of all were real: where every man deplored his private part in that calamity, and even those who had not tasted of your favours, yet built so much on the fame of your beneficence, that they bemoaned the loss of their expectations.

This brought the untimely death of your great father into fresh remembrance; as if the same decree had passed on two short successive generations of the virtuous; and I repeated to myself the same verses, which I had formerly applied to him:

*Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra
Esse sinunt.*

But to the joy not only of all good men, but of mankind in general, the unhappy omen took not place. You are still living to enjoy the blessings and applause of all the good you have performed, the prayers of multitudes whom you have obliged, for your long prosperity; and that your power of doing generous and charitable actions may be as extended as your will; which is by none more zealously desired than by your Grace's most humble, most obliged, and most obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE.

It is with a poet as with a man who designs to build, and is very exact, as he supposes, in casting up the cost beforehand; but, generally speaking, he is mistaken in his account, and reckons short in the expense he first intended: he alters his mind as the work proceeds, and will have this or that convenience more, of which he had not thought when he began. So has it happened to me. I have built a house, where I intended but a lodge; yet with better success than a certain nobleman, who, beginning with a dog-kennel, never lived to finish the palace he had contrived.*

From translating the first of Homer's *Iliads* (which I intended as an essay to the whole work) I proceeded to the translation of the twelfth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, because it contains, among other things, the causes, the beginning, and ending of the Trojan war. Here I ought in reason to have stopped; but the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses lying next in my way, I could not balk them. When I had compassed them, I was so taken with the former part of the fifteenth book (which is the masterpiece of the whole *Metamorphoses*) that I enjoined myself the pleasing task of rendering it into English. And now I found, by the number of my verses, that they began to swell into a little volume; which gave me an occasion of looking backward on some beauties of my author, in his former books: there occurred to me the hunting of the boar, *Cinyras and Myrrha*, the good-natured story of *Baucis and Philemon*, with the rest, which I hope I have translated closely enough, and given them the same turn of verse which they had in the original; and this, I may say without vanity, is not the talent of every poet. He who has arrived the nearest to it, is the ingenious and learned Sandys, the best versifier of the former age; if I may properly call it by that name, which was the former part of this concluding century. For Spenser and Fairfax both flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; great masters in our language; and who saw much farther into the beauties of our numbers than those who immediately followed them. Milton was the poetical son of Spenser, and Mr. Waller of Fairfax; for we have our lineal descents and clans, as well as other families. Spenser more than once in-

* Supposed to be Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who, after expending enormous sums on Clevedon, died before it was finished.

sinuates that the soul of Chaucer was transfused into his body;* and that he was begotten by him two hundred years after his decease. Milton has acknowledged to me, that Spenser was his original; and many besides myself have heard our famous Waller own, that he derived the harmony of his numbers from the Godfrey of Bulloigne, which was turned into English by Mr. Fairfax.

But to return. Having done with Ovid for this time, it came into my mind, that our old English poet, Chaucer, in many things resembled him, and that with no disadvantage on the side of the modern author, as I shall endeavour to prove when I compare them; and as I am, and always have been, studious to promote the honour of my native country, so I soon resolved to put their merits to the trial, by turning some of the *Canterbury Tales* into our language, as it is now refined; for by this means, both the poets being set in the same light, and dressed in the same English habit, story to be compared with story, a certain judgment may be made betwixt them by the reader, without obtruding my opinion on him. Or if I seem partial to my countryman, and predecessor in the laurel, the friends of antiquity are not few; and besides many of the learned, Ovid has almost all the beaux, and the whole fair sex, his declared patrons. Perhaps I have assumed somewhat more to myself than they allow me, because I have adventured to sum up the evidence; but the readers are the jury, and their privilege remains entire to decide according to the merits of the cause, or, if they please, to bring it to another hearing before some other court. In the meantime, to follow the thread of my discourse (as thoughts, according to Mr. Hobbes, have always some connexion) so from Chaucer I was lead to think on Boccace, who was not only his contemporary, but also pursued the same studies; wrote novels in prose, and many works in verse; particularly is said to have invented the octave rhyme, or stanza of eight lines, which ever since has been maintained by the practice of all Italian writers, who are, or at least assume the title of, Heroic Poets: he and Chaucer, among other things, had this in common, that they refined their mother tongues; but with this difference, that Dante had begun to file their language, at least in verse, before the time of Boccace, who likewise received no little help from his master Petrarch. But the reformation of their prose was wholly

* 'I cannot find,' observes Scott, 'any such passages in Spenser as are here alluded to.'

owing to Boccace himself, who is yet the standard of purity in the Italian tongue; though many of his phrases are become obsolete, as in process of time it must needs happen. Chaucer (as you have formerly been told by our learned Mr. Rymer) first adorned and amplified our barren tongue from the Provençal, which was then the most polished of all the modern languages; but this subject has been copiously treated by that great critic, who deserves no little commendation from us his countrymen. For these reasons of time, and resemblance of genius in Chaucer and Boccace, I resolved to join them in my present work; to which I have added some original papers of my own, which whether they are equal or inferior to my other poems, an author is the most improper judge; and therefore I leave them wholly to the mercy of the reader. I will hope the best, that they will not be condemned; but if they should, I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators, that they would count fourscore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number, a cripple in my limbs; but what decays are in my mind, the reader must determine. I think myself as vigorous as ever in the faculties of my soul, excepting only my memory, which is not impaired to any great degree; and if I lose not more of it, I have no great reason to complain. What judgment I had, increases rather than diminishes; and thoughts, such as they are, come crowding in so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to chuse or to reject; to run them into verse, or to give them the other harmony of prose. I have so long studied and practised both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me. In short, though I may lawfully plead some part of the old gentleman's excuse, yet I will reserve it till I think I have greater need, and ask no grains of allowance for the faults of this my present work, but those which are given of course to human frailty. I will not trouble my reader with the shortness of time in which I writ it, or the several intervals of sickness; they who think too well of their own performances, are apt to boast in their prefaces how little time their works have cost them, and what other business of more importance interfered; but the reader will be as apt to ask the question, why they allowed not a longer time to make their works more perfect? and why they had so despicable an opinion of their judges, as to thrust their indigested stuff upon them, as if they deserved no better?

With this account of my present undertaking, I conclude the first part of this discourse: in the second part, as at a second sitting, though I alter not the draught, I must touch the same features over again, and change the dead colouring of the whole. In general I will only say, that I have written nothing which savours of immorality or profaneness; at least, I am not conscious to myself of any such intention. If there happen to be found an irreverent expression, or a thought too wanton, they are crept into my verses through my inadvertency; if the searchers find any in the cargo, let them be staved or forfeited, like contraband goods; at least, let their authors be answerable for them, as being but imported merchandise, and not of my own manufacture. On the other side, I have endeavoured to choose such fables, both ancient and modern, as contain in each of them some instructive moral, which I could prove by induction, but the way is tedious; and they leap foremost into sight, without the reader's trouble of looking after them. I wish I could affirm with a safe conscience, that I had taken the same care in all my former writings; for it must be owned, that supposing verses are never so beautiful or pleasing, yet if they contain anything which shocks religion, or good manners, they are at best, what Horace says of good numbers without good sense, *Versus inopes rerum, nugæque canora*. Thus far, I hope, I am right in court, without renouncing my other right of self-defence, where I have been wrongfully accused, and my sense wire-drawn into blasphemy or bawdry, as it has often been by a religious lawyer, in a late pleading against the stage; in which he mixes truth with falsehood, and has not forgotten the old rule of calumniating strongly, that something may remain.

I resume the thread of my discourse with the first of my translations, which was the first *Iliad* of Homer. If it shall please God to give me longer life, and moderate health, my intentions are to translate the whole *Ilias*; provided still that I meet with those encouragements from the public, which may enable me to proceed in my undertaking with some cheerfulness. And this I dare assure the world before-hand, that I have found, by trial, Homer a more pleasing task than Virgil, though I say not the translation will be less laborious. For the Grecian is more according to my genius, than the Latin poet. In the works of the two authors we may read their manners, and natural inclinations, which are wholly different. Virgil was of a quiet, sedate temper; Homer was violent, impetuous, and full of fire. The chief talent of Virgil was propriety of thoughts, and ornament of words:

Homer was rapid in his thoughts, and took all the liberties both of numbers, and of expressions, which his language, and the age in which he lived, allowed him. Homer's invention was more copious, Virgil's more confined; so that if Homer had not led the way, it was not in Virgil to have begun heroic poetry; for nothing can be more evident, than that the Roman poem is but the second part of the *Ilias*; a continuation of the same story, and the persons already formed; the manners of Æneas are those of Hector superadded to those which Homer gave him. The Adventures of Ulysses in the *Odysseis* are imitated in the first six books of Virgil's *Æneis*; and though the accidents are not the same, (which would have argued him of a servile copying, and total barrenness of invention) yet the seas were the same, in which both the heroes wandered; and Dido cannot be denied to be the poetical daughter of Calypso. The six latter books of Virgil's poem are the four and twenty *Iliads* contracted: a quarrel occasioned by a lady, a single combat, battles fought, and a town besieged. I say not this in derogation to Virgil, neither do I contradict anything which I have formerly said in his just praise; for his Episodes are almost wholly of his own invention; and the form which he has given to the telling, makes the tale his own, even though the original story had been the same. But this proves, however, that Homer taught Virgil to design; and if invention be the first virtue of an Epic poet, then the Latin poem can only be allowed the second place. Mr. Hobbes, in the preface to his own bald translation of the *Ilias*, (studying poetry as he did mathematics, when it was too late) Mr. Hobbes, I say, begins the praise of Homer where he should have ended it. He tells us, that the first beauty of an Epic poem consists in diction, that is, in the choice of words, and harmony of numbers; now, the words are the colouring of the work, which in the order of nature is last to be considered. The design, the disposition, the manners, and the thoughts, are all before it: where any of those are wanting or imperfect, so much wants or is imperfect in the imitation of human life; which is in the very definition of a poem. Words indeed, like glaring colours, are the first beauties that arise, and strike the sight: but if the draught be false or lame, the figures ill-disposed, the manners obscure or inconsistent, or the thoughts unnatural, then the finest colours are but daubing, and the piece is a beautiful monster at the best. Neither Virgil nor Homer were deficient in any of the former beauties; but in this last, which is expression, the Roman poet is at least equal to the Grecian, as I have said elsewhere; supplying the poverty of his

language by his musical ear, and by his diligence. But to return: our two great poets, being so different in their tempers, one choleric and sanguine, the other phlegmatic and melancholic: that which makes them excel in their several ways, is, that each of them has followed his own natural inclination, as well in forming the design, as in the execution of it. The very heroes shew their authors; Achilles is hot, impatient, revengeful, *Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer*, &c. Æneas patient, considerate, careful of his people, and merciful to his enemies; ever submissive to the will of heaven, *quò fata trahunt, retrahuntque sequamur*. I could please myself with enlarging on this subject, but am forced to defer it to a fitter time. From all I have said I will only draw this inference, that the action of Homer being more full of vigour than that of Virgil, according to the temper of the writer, is of consequence more pleasing to the reader. One warms you by degrees; the other sets you on fire all at once, and never intermits his heat. 'Tis the same difference which Longinus makes betwixt the effects of eloquence in Demosthenes and Tully. One persuades; the other commands. You never cool while you read Homer, even not in the second book, (a graceful flattery to his countrymen;) but he hastens from the ships, and concludes not that book till he has made you an amends by the violent playing of a new machine. From thence he hurries on his action with variety of events, and ends it in less compass than two months. This vehemence of his, I confess, is more suitable to my temper; and therefore I have translated his first book with greater pleasure than any part of Virgil; but it was not a pleasure without pains: the continual agitations of the spirits must needs be a weakening of any constitution, especially in age; and many pauses are required for refreshment betwixt the heats; the *Iliad* of itself being a third part longer than all Virgil's works together.

This is what I thought needful in this place to say of Homer. I proceed to Ovid and Chaucer, considering the former only in relation to the latter. With Ovid ended the golden age of the Roman tongue: from Chaucer the purity of the English tongue began. The manners of the poets were not unlike: both of them were well-bred, well-natured, amorous, and libertine, at least in their writings, it may be also in their lives. Their studies were the same, philosophy and philology. Both of them were known in astronomy, of which Ovid's books of the Roman feasts, and Chaucer's treatise of the Astrolabe, are sufficient witnesses. But Chaucer was likewise an astrologer, as were Virgil, Horace, Persius, and Manilius. Both writ with wonderful facility and

clearness: neither were great inventors; for Ovid only copied the Grecian fables; and most of Chaucer's stories were taken from his Italian contemporaries, or their predecessors. Boccace's *Decameron* was first published; and from thence our Englishman has borrowed many of his *Canterbury Tales*; yet that of *Palamon and Arcite* was written, in all probability, by some Italian wit in a former age; as I shall prove hereafter: the tale of *Grizild* was the invention of Petrarch; by him sent to Boccace, from whom it came to Chaucer.* *Troilus and Cressida* was also written by a Lombard author; but much amplified by our English translator, as well as beautified; the genius of our countrymen in general being rather to improve an invention, than to invent themselves; as is evident not only in our poetry, but in many of our manufactures. I find I have anticipated already, and taken up from Boccace before I come to him; but there is so much less behind; and I am of the temper of most kings, who love to be in debt, are all for present money, no matter how they pay it afterwards: besides, the nature of a preface is rambling; never wholly out of the way, nor in it. This I have learnt from the practice of honest Montaigne, and return at my pleasure to Ovid and Chaucer, of whom I have little more to say. Both of them built on the inventions of other men; yet since Chaucer had something of his own, as *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, *The Cock and the Fox*, which I have translated, and some others, I may justly give our countryman the precedence in that part; since I can remember nothing of Ovid which was wholly his. Both of them understood the manners, under which name I comprehend the passions, and, in a larger sense, the descriptions of persons, and their very habits; for an example, I see Baucis and Philemon as perfectly before me, as if some ancient painter had drawn them; and all the pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*, their humours, their features, and the very dress, as distinctly as if I had supped with them at the Tabard in Southwark; yet even there too the figures in Chaucer are much more lively, and set in a better light: which

* Scott has a note upon this passage, in which he says that Dryden has inverted the fact, that Boccaccio first published the story of *Griselda*, and that Petrarch did not translate it till 1373, the year of his death, when he executed a Latin version of it. Dryden, who is likely to have derived his authority from the Giolito edition of Boccaccio, 1552, is right nevertheless. The original letter from Petrarch transmitting the translation to Boccaccio is still extant, in which Petrarch adds that he had heard the story many years before. It is highly probable, therefore, that Boccaccio was originally indebted to Petrarch for the story. Chaucer had it, also, direct from Petrarch. The French claim it as a *fabliau*, but have failed in their evidence.

though I have not time to prove, yet I appeal to the reader, and am sure he will clear me from partiality. The thoughts and words remain to be considered in the comparison of the two poets; and I have saved myself one half of that labour, by owning that Ovid lived when the Roman tongue was in its meridian, Chaucer in the dawning of our language; therefore that part of the comparison stands not on an equal foot, any more than the diction of Ennius and Ovid, or of Chaucer and our present English. The words are given up as a post not to be defended in our poet, because he wanted the modern art of fortifying. The thoughts remain to be considered, and they are to be measured only by their propriety; that is, as they flow more or less naturally from the persons described, on such and such occasions. The vulgar judges, which are nine parts in ten of all nations, who call conceits and jingles wit, who see Ovid full of them, and Chaucer altogether without them, will think me little less than mad for preferring the Englishman to the Roman: yet, with their leave, I must presume to say, that the things they admire are only glittering trifles, and so far from being witty, that in a serious poem they are nauseous, because they are unnatural. Would any man, who is ready to die for love, describe his passion like Narcissus? Would he think of *inopem me copia fecit*, and a dozen more of such expressions, poured on the neck of one another, and signifying all the same thing? If this were wit, was this a time to be witty, when the poor wretch was in the agony of death? This is just John Littlewit in *Bartholomew Fair*, who had a conceit (as he tells you) left him in his misery; a miserable conceit. On these occasions the poet should endeavour to raise pity; but instead of this, Ovid is tickling you to laugh. Virgil never made use of such machines, when he was moving you to commiserate the death of Dido: he would not destroy what he was building. Chaucer makes Arcite violent in his love, and unjust in the pursuit of it: yet when he came to die, he made him think more reasonably: he repents not of his love, for that had altered his character; but acknowledges the injustice of his proceedings, and resigns Emilia to Palamon. What would Ovid have done on this occasion? He would certainly have made Arcite witty on his death-bed. He had complained he was farther off from possession, by being so near, and a thousand such boyisms, which Chaucer rejected as below the dignity of the subject. They who think otherwise would, by the same reason, prefer Lucan and Ovid to Homer and Virgil, and Martial to all four of them. As for the turn of words, in which Ovid particularly excels all poets, they are sometimes a fault, and some-

times a beauty, as they are used properly or improperly; but in strong passions always to be shunned, because passions are serious, and will admit no playing. The French have a high value for them; and I confess, they are often what they call delicate, when they are introduced with judgment; but Chaucer writ with more simplicity, and followed nature more closely, than to use them. I have thus far, to the best of my knowledge, been an upright judge betwixt the parties in competition, not meddling with the design nor the disposition of it; because the design was not their own, and in the disposing of it they were equal. It remains that I say somewhat of Chaucer in particular.

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil: he is a perpetual fountain of good sense; learned in all sciences; and therefore speaks properly on all subjects; as he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off, a continence which is practised by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. One of our late great poets is sunk in his reputation, because he could never forego any conceit which came in his way, but swept like a drag-net, great and small. There was plenty enough, but the dishes were ill-sorted; whole pyramids of sweetmeats for boys and women, but little of solid meat for men: all this proceeded not from any want of knowledge, but of judgment; neither did he want that in discerning the beauties and faults of other poets; but only indulged himself in the luxury of writing; and perhaps knew it was a fault, but hoped the reader would not find it. For this reason, though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer: and for ten impressions, which his works have had in so many successive years, yet at present a hundred books are scarcely purchased once a twelvemonth: for, as my last Lord Rochester said, though somewhat profanely, 'Not being of God, he could not stand.'*

Chaucer followed nature everywhere; but was never so bold to go beyond her: and there is a great difference of being *Poeta* and *nimis Poeta*, if we helieve Catullus, as much as betwixt a modest behaviour and affectation. The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us; but it is like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*:

* From these allusions to Cowley, it would appear that he had already gone out of fashion—a fate to which Dryden had himself mainly contributed.

they who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lydgate and Gower, his contemporaries: there is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. It is true, I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine: but this opinion is not worth confuting; it is so gross and obvious an error, that common sense (which is a rule in everything but matters of faith and revelation) must convince the reader, that equality of numbers in every verse which we call Heroic, was either not known, or not always practised in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses, which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise.* We can only say, that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first. We must be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in process of time a Lucilius, and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer there was a Spenser, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being: and our numbers were in their nonage till these last appeared. I need say little of his parentage, life, and fortunes: they are to be found at large in all the editions of his works. He was employed abroad and favoured by Edward the Third, Richard the Second, and Henry the Fourth, and was poet, as I suppose, to all three of them. In Richard's time, I doubt, he was a little dipt in the rebellion of the commons; and being brother-in-law to John of Gaunt, it was no wonder if he followed the fortunes of that family; and was well with Henry the Fourth when he had deposed his predecessor. Neither is it to be admired, that Henry, who was a wise as well as a valiant prince, who claimed by succession, and was sensible that his title was not sound, but was rightfully in Mortimer, who had married the heir

* This criticism on Chaucer's versification entirely overlooks the state of the language when Chaucer wrote. Dryden appears to have tested Chaucer by the English in which he wrote himself, and not by the English thickly sown with French which was current in the fourteenth century. Tried by the standard of his own age—the only standard that is applicable to him—we find few of those metrical blemishes in Chaucer that are here charged upon him. The judgment of Speght, alluded to by Dryden, has been fully sustained by the last and best edition of Chaucer.

of York; it was not to be admired, I say, if that great politician should be pleased to have the greatest wit of those times in his interests, and to be the trumpet of his praises. Augustus had given him the example, by the advice of Mæcenas, who recommended Virgil and Horace to him; whose praises helped to make him popular while he was alive, and after his death have made him precious to posterity. As for the religion of our poet, he seems to have some little bias towards the opinions of Wickliff, after John of Gaunt his patron; somewhat of which appears in the tale of *Piers Plowman*; yet I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the vices of the clergy in his age: their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly interest, deserved the lashes which he gave them, both in that, and in most of his *Canterbury Tales*: neither has his contemporary Boccace spared them. Yet both those poets lived in much esteem with good and holy men in orders: for the scandal which is given by particular priests, reflects not on the sacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Canon, and his Friar, took not from the character of his Good Parson. A satirical poet is the check of the laymen on bad priests. We are only to take care, that we involve not the innocent with the guilty in the same condemnation. The good cannot be too much honoured, nor the bad too coarsely used: for the corruption of the best becomes the worst. When a clergyman is whipped, his gown is first taken off, by which the dignity of his order is secured: if he be wrongfully accused, he has his action of slander; and it is at the poet's peril, if he transgress the law. But they will tell us, that all kind of satire, though never so well deserved by particular priests, yet brings the whole order into contempt. Is then the peerage of England anything dishonoured, when a peer suffers for his treason? If he be libelled, or any way defamed, he has his *Scandalum Magnatum* to punish the offender. They, who use this kind of argument, seem to be conscious to themselves of somewhat which has deserved the poet's lash; and are less concerned for their public capacity, than for their private; at least there is pride at the bottom of their reasoning. If the faults of men in orders are only to be judged among themselves, they are all in some sort parties: for, since they say the honour of their order is concerned in every member of it, how can we be sure, that they will be impartial judges? How far I may be allowed to speak my opinion in this case, I know not: but I am sure a dispute of this nature caused mischief in abundance betwixt a king of England and an archbishop of Canterbury; one standing up for the laws

of his land, and the other for the honour (as he called it) of God's Church; which ended in the murder of the prelate, and in the whipping of his majesty from post to pillar for his penance. The learned and ingenious Dr. Drake has saved me the labour of inquiring into the esteem and reverence which the priests have had of old: and I would rather extend than diminish any part of it: yet I must needs say, that when a priest provokes me without any occasion given him, I have no reason, unless it be the charity of a Christian, to forgive him. *Prior læsit* is justification sufficient in the Civil Law. If I answer him in his own language, self-defence, I am sure, must be allowed me; and if I carry it farther, even to a sharp recrimination, somewhat may be indulged to human frailty. Yet my resentment has not wrought so far but that I have followed Chaucer in his character of a holy man, and have enlarged on that subject with some pleasure, reserving to myself the right, if I shall think fit hereafter, to describe another sort of priests, such as are more easily to be found than the good parson; such as have given the last blow to Christianity in this age, by a practice so contrary to their doctrine. But this will keep cold till another time. In the meanwhile, I take up Chaucer where I left him. He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales* the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole English nation, in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very physiognomies and persons. Baptista Porta could not have described their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different: the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are several men, and distinguished from each other, as much as the mincing lady Prioress, and the broad-speaking gap-toothed Wife of Bath. But enough of this: there is such a variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and

know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our forefathers and great-grandames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are still remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other names than those of Monks and Friars, and Canons, and lady Abbesses, and Nuns: for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of nature, though everything is altered. May I have leave to do myself the justice (since my enemies will do me none, and are so far from granting me to be a good poet, that they will not allow me so much as to be a Christian, or a moral man,) may I have leave, I say, to inform my reader, that I have confined my choice to such tales of Chaucer as savour nothing of immodesty. If I had desired more to please than to instruct, the Reeve, the Miller, the Shipman, the Merchant, the Sumner, and, above all, the Wife of Bath, in the prologue to her tale, would have procured me as many friends and readers, as there are beaux and ladies of pleasure in the town. But I will no more offend against good manners: I am sensible, as I ought to be, of the scandal I have given by my loose writings; and make what reparation I am able, by this public acknowledgment. If any thing of this nature, or of profaneness, be crept into these poems, I am so far from defending it, that I disown it. *Totum hoc indictum volo.* Chaucer makes another manner of apology for his broad-speaking, and Boccace makes the like; but I will follow neither of them. Our countryman, in the end of his characters, before the *Canterbury Tales*, thus excuses the ribaldry, which is very gross in many of his novels:

' But first, I pray you of your courtesy,
That ye ne arrettee it nought my villany,
Though that I plainly speak in this mattere
To tellen you her words, and eke her chere:
Ne though I speak her words properly,
For this ye knowen as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse as nye, as ever he can:
Everich word of it been in his charge,
All speke he, never so rudely, ne large.
Or else he mote tellen his tale untrue,
Or feine things, or find words new:
He may not spare, although he were his brother,
He mote as well say o word as another.
Christ spake himself full broad in holy writ,
And well I wote no villany is it,
Eke Plato saith, who so can him rede,
The words mote been cousin to the dede.'

Yet if a man should have inquired of Boccace, or of Chaucer, what need they had of introducing such characters, where obscene words were proper in their mouths, but very indecent to be heard, I know not what answer they could have made; for that reason, such tale shall be left untold by me. You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete, that his sense is scarce to be understood. And you have likewise more than one example of his unequal numbers, which were mentioned before. Yet many of his verses consist of ten syllables, and the words not much behind our present English: as, for example, these two lines, in the description of the carpenter's young wife:

'Winning she was, as is a jolly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.'

I have almost done with Chaucer, when I have answered some objections relating to my present work. I find some people are offended that I have turned these tales into modern English; because they think them unworthy of my pains, and look on Chaucer as a dry, old-fashioned wit, not worth reviving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leicester say, that Mr. Cowley himself was of that opinion; who having read him over at my lord's request, declared he had no taste of him. I dare not advance my opinion against the judgment of so great an author; but I think it fair, however, to leave the decision to the public. Mr. Cowley was too modest to set up for a dictator: and being shocked, perhaps, with his old style, never examined into the depth of his good sense. Chaucer, I confess, is a rough diamond; and must first be polished ere he shines. I deny not, likewise, that, living in our early days of poetry, he writes not always of a piece, but sometimes mingles trivial things with those of greater moment. Sometimes also, though not often, he runs riot, like Ovid, and knows not when he has said enough; but there are more great wits besides Chaucer whose fault is their excess of conceits, and those ill sorted. An author is not to write all he can, but only all he ought. Having observed this redundancy in Chaucer (as it is an easy matter for a man of ordinary parts to find a fault in one of greater), I have not tied myself to a literal translation; but have often omitted what I judged unnecessary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts. I have presumed farther, in some places; and added somewhat of my own where I thought my author was deficient, and had not given his thoughts their true lustre, for want of words in the beginning of our language. And to this I was the more emboldened, because (if I may be permitted to say it of myself,) I found

I had a soul congenial to his, and that I had been conversant in the same studies. Another poet, in another age, may take the same liberty with my writings; if at least they live long enough to deserve correction. It was also necessary sometimes to restore the sense of Chaucer, which was lost or mangled in the errors of the press. Let this example suffice at present:—In the story of *Palamon and Arcite*, where the Temple of Diana is described, you find these verses in all the editions of our author:

‘ There saw I Danè, turned into a tree,
I mean not the goddess Diane,
But Venus daughter, which that hight Danè:’

Which, after a little consideration, I knew was to be reformed into this sense,—that Daphne, the daughter of Peneus, was turned into a tree.* I durst not make thus bold with Ovid; lest some future Milbourn should arise, and say I varied from my author because I understood him not.

But there are other judges who think I ought not to have translated Chaucer into English, out of a quite contrary notion. They suppose there is a certain veneration due to his old language; and that it is a little less than profanation and sacrilege to alter it. They are farther of opinion, that somewhat of his good sense will suffer in this transfusion, and much of the beauty of his thoughts will infallibly be lost, which appear with more grace in their old habit. Of this opinion was that excellent person whom I mentioned, the late Earl of Leicester, who valued Chaucer as much as Mr. Cowley despised him. My lord dissuaded me from this attempt (for I was thinking of it some years before his death), and his authority prevailed so far with me as to defer my undertaking while he lived, in deference to him. Yet my reason was not convinced with what he urged against it. If the first end of a writer be to be understood, then, as his language grows obsolete, his thoughts must grow obscure: *multa renascuntur quæ nunc cecidere; cadentque, quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus, quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi*. When an ancient word for its sound and significancy deserves to be revived, I have that reasonable veneration for anti-

* The passage stands thus in Mr. Wright's edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, the text of which is founded on the Harleian MS., No. 7334, which he conjectures to have been written soon after Chaucer's death:

‘ Ther sawgh I Dyane turned intil a tree,
I mene nought the goddes Dyane.
But Peneus doughter, the which hight Dane.’

quity, to restore it. All beyond this is superstition. Words are not like landmarks, so sacred as never to be removed. Customs are changed; and even statutes are silently repealed, when the reason ceases for which they were enacted. As for the other part of the argument,—that his thoughts will lose of their original beauty, by the innovation of words: in the first place, not only their beauty, but their being is lost, where they are no longer understood; which is the present case. I grant that something must be lost in all transfusion,—that is, in all translations; but the sense will remain, which would otherwise be lost, or at least be maimed, when it is scarce intelligible, and that but to a few. How few are there who can read Chaucer, so as to understand him perfectly? and if imperfectly, then with less profit and no pleasure. 'Tis not for the use of some old Saxon friends that I have taken these pains with him: let them neglect my version, because they have no need of it. I made it for their sakes who understand sense and poetry as well as they, when that poetry and sense is put into words which they understand. I will go farther, and dare to add, that what beauties I lose in some places, I give to others which had them not originally. But in this I may be partial to myself. Let the reader judge: and I submit to his decision. Yet I think I have just occasion to complain of them, who, because they understand Chaucer, would deprive the greater part of their countrymen of the same advantage, and hoard him up, as misers do their grandam gold, only to look on it themselves, and hinder others from making use of it. In sum, I seriously protest, that no man ever had, or can have, a greater veneration for Chaucer, than myself. I have translated some part of his works, only that I might perpetuate his memory, or at least refresh it, amongst my countrymen. If I have altered him any where for the better, I must at the same time acknowledge that I could have done nothing without him: *Facile est inventis addere*, is no great commendation; and I am not so vain to think I have deserved a greater. I will conclude what I have to say of him singly, with this one remark: A lady of my acquaintance, who keeps a kind of correspondence with some authors of the fair sex in France, has been informed by them, that Made-moiselle de Scudery, who is as old as Sibyl, and inspired like her by the same god of poetry, is at this time translating Chaucer into modern French. From which I gather, that he has been formerly translated into the old Provençal (for how she should come to understand old English I know not). But the matter of fact being true, it makes me think that there is something in it like fatality;

that, after certain periods of time, the fame and memory of great wits should be renewed, as Chaucer is, both in France and England. If this be wholly chance, 'tis extraordinary; and I dare not call it more, for fear of being taxed with superstition.

Boccace comes last to be considered; who, living in the same age with Chaucer, had the same genius, and followed the same studies. Both writ novels, and each of them cultivated his mother tongue. But the greatest resemblance of our two modern authors being in their familiar style, and pleasing way of relating comical adventures, I may pass it over, because I have translated nothing from Boccace of that nature. In the serious part of poetry, the advantage is wholly on Chaucer's side; for though the Englishman has borrowed many tales from the Italian, yet it appears that those of Boccace were not generally of his own making, but taken from authors of former ages, and by him only modelled; so that what there was of invention in either of them, may be judged equal. But Chaucer has refined on Boccace, and has mended the stories which he has borrowed, in his way of telling: though prose allows more liberty of thought, and the expression is more easy, when unconfined by numbers. Our countryman carries weight, and yet wins the race at disadvantage. I desire not the reader should take my word; and, therefore, I will set two of their discourses, on the same subject, in the same light, for every man to judge betwixt them. I translated Chaucer first; and, amongst the rest, pitched on *The Wife of Bath's Tale*; not daring, as I have said, to adventure on her Prologue, because it is too licentious. There Chaucer introduces an old woman of mean parentage, whom a youthful knight of noble blood was forced to marry, and consequently loathed her. The crone being in bed with him on the wedding-night, and finding his aversion, endeavours to win his affection by reason; and speaks a good word for herself, (as who could blame her?) in hope to mollify the sullen bridegroom. She takes her topics from the benefits of poverty, the advantages of old age and ugliness, the vanity of youth, and the silly pride of ancestry and titles without inherent virtue, which is the true nobility. When I had closed Chaucer, I returned to Ovid, and translated some more of his fables; and by this time had so far forgotten *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, that, when I took up Boccace, unawares I fell on the same argument of preferring virtue to nobility of blood and titles, in the story of *Sigismonda*; which I had certainly avoided for the resemblance of the two discourses, if my memory had not failed me. Let the reader weigh them both; and if he thinks me partial to Chaucer, it is in him to right Boccace.

I prefer in our countryman, far above all his other stories, the noble poem of *Palamon and Arcite*, which is of the epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*. The story is more pleasing than either of them, the manners as perfect, the diction as poetical, the learning as deep and various, and the disposition full as artful; only it includes a greater length of time, as taking up seven years at least; but Aristotle has left undecided the duration of the action, which yet is easily reduced into the compass of a year, by a narration of what preceded the return of Palamon to Athens. I had thought for the honour of our nation, and more particularly for his whose laurel, though unworthy, I have worn after him, that this story was of English growth, and Chaucer's own; but I was undeceived by Boccace; for, casually looking on the end of his seventh giornata, I found Dioneo (under which name he shadows himself,) and Fiametta (who represents his mistress, the natural daughter of Robert, king of Naples,) of whom these words are spoken,—*Dioneo e la Fiametta granpezza contarono insieme d'Arcita, e di Palamone*: by which it appears that this story was written before the time of Boccace; but the name of its author being wholly lost, Chaucer is now become an original; and I question not but the poem has received many beauties by passing through his noble hands. Besides this tale, there is another of his own invention, after the manner of the Provençals, called *The Flower and the Leaf*, with which I was so particularly pleased, both for the invention and the moral, that I cannot hinder myself from recommending it to the reader.

As a corollary to this preface, in which I have done justice to others, I owe somewhat to myself: not that I think it worth my time to enter the lists with one Milbourn, and one Blackmore, but barely to take notice that such men there are who have written scurrilously against me, without any provocation. Milbourn, who is in Orders, pretends amongst the rest this quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul on priesthood. If I have, I am only to ask pardon of good priests, and am afraid his part of the reparation will come to little. Let him be satisfied that he shall not be able to force himself upon me for an adversary. I condemn him too much to enter into competition with him. His own translations of Virgil have answered his criticisms on mine. If (as they say he has declared in print,) he prefers the version of Ogilby to mine, the world has made him the same compliment; for it is agreed on all hands that he writes even below Ogilby. That, you will say, is not easily to be done: but what cannot Milbourn bring about? I am satisfied, however, that while he

and I live together, I shall not be thought the worst poet of the age. It looks as if I had desired him underhand to write so ill against me; but, upon my honest word, I have not bribed him to do me this service, and am wholly guiltless of his pamphlet. 'Tis true, I should be glad if I could persuade him to continue his good offices, and write such another critique on any thing of mine; for I find by experience he has a great stroke with the reader, when he condemns any of my poems, to make the world have a better opinion of them. He has taken some pains with my poetry; but nobody will be persuaded to take the same with his. If I had taken to the church, (as he affirms, but which was never in my thoughts,) I should have had more sense, if not more grace, than to have turned myself out of my benefice by writing libels on my parishioners. But his account of my manners and my principles are of a piece with his cavils and his poetry: and so I have done with him for ever.

As for the City Bard, or Knight Physician, I hear his quarrel to me is, that I was the author of *Absalom and Achitophel*, which he thinks is a little hard on his fanatic patrons in London.

But I will deal the more civilly with his two poems, because nothing ill is to be spoken of the dead: and therefore peace be to the manes of his Arthurs. I will only say, that it was not for this noble knight that I drew the plan of an epic poem on King Arthur, in my preface to the translation of *Juvenal*. The guardian angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage; and therefore he rejected them, as Dares did the whirlbats of Eryx, when they were thrown before him by Entellus. Yet from that preface he plainly took his hint: for he began immediately upon the story; though he had the baseness not to acknowledge his benefactor; but instead of it, to traduce me in a libel.

I shall say the less of Mr. Collier,* because in many things he

* In this notice of Collier, Dryden deals leniently with his assailant. But Dryden had the worst side of the controversy, and Collier would have had very much more the best of it had he dealt less in abuse, and better understood the function of criticism he undertook. Nothing but the notorious vices of the stage could have procured for Collier's book the notoriety it obtained. The invective is as coarse as the licentiousness it condemns; and the argument breaks down in a hundred places, from its unreasoning vehemence. Collier's book was published in 1697. The allusion that will be found in the *Fables*, and in the Epilogue to the *Pilgrim*, constitute the only further notice Dryden took of it. Several other writers, however, answered it, and Dryden was specially vindicated in *A Defence of Dramatic Poetry*, by a legal critic, who exposed Collier's blunders respecting the state of the

has taxed me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine, which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality; and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one. Yet it were not difficult to prove that in many places he has perverted my meaning by his glosses; and interpreted my words into blasphemy and bawdry, of which they were not guilty; besides that he is too much given to horse-play in his railery; and comes to battle like a dictator from the plough. I will not say, The zeal of God's house has eaten him up; but I am sure it has devoured some part of his good manners and civility. It might also be doubted whether it were altogether zeal, which prompted him to this rough manner of proceeding; perhaps it became not one of his function to rake into the rubbish of ancient and modern plays; a divine might have employed his pains to better purpose, than in the nastiness of Plautus and Aristophanes; whose examples, as they excuse not me, so it might be possibly supposed, that he read them not without some pleasure. They who have written commentaries on those poets, or on Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, have explained some vices, which without their interpretation had been unknown to modern times. Neither has he judged impartially betwixt the former age and us.

There is more bawdry in one play of Fletcher's, called *The Custom of the Country*, than in all ours together. Yet this has been often acted on the stage in my remembrance. Are the times so much more reformed now, than they were five and twenty years ago? If they are, I congratulate the amendment of our morals. But I am not to prejudice the cause of my fellow-poets, though I abandon my own defence: they have some of them answered for themselves, and neither they nor I can think

law. There were answers also by Drake, Filmer, and others. Congreve and Wycherley entered into the discussion, and provoked a rejoinder from Collier more violent, if possible, than the original tract. Collier was not without allies in this controversy, the most effective of whom was the Rev. Mr. Bedford, chaplain to the Duke of Bedford, who, in 1702, published at Bristol a book, called *The Evil and Danger of Stage Plays*. In this curious volume there is a little appendix of 'Presentments of the Grand Juries against the Play-house' which had been just then erected in Bristol, showing the grounds on which it was sought to interdict the performance of stage plays altogether.

Mr. Collier so formidable an enemy, that we should shun him. He has lost ground at the latter end of the day, by pursuing his point too far, like the Prince of Conde at the battle of Senneffe: from immoral plays, to no plays; *ab abusu ad usum, non valet consequentia*. But being a party, I am not to erect myself into a judge. As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels, that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them. Blackmore and Milbourn are only distinguished from the crowd, by being remembered to their infamy.

‘——— Demetri, teque Tigelli
Discipulorum inter jubeo plorare cathedrac.’

Tales from Chaucer.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF ORMOND,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM OF

PALAMON AND ARCITE.

[THE lady to whom these verses were addressed was a daughter of the Duke of Bedford. The allusion to Ireland refers to a recent visit made to that country by the Duke and Duchess of Ormond. The Duke afterwards (1703) went over as Lord Lieutenant. A special interest attaches to this poem, as it was the last written by Dryden, with the exception of the *Secular Masque*, and the Prologue and Epilogue to the *Pilgrim*.]

MADAM,

THE bard who first adorned our native tongue,
Tuned to his British lyre this ancient song;
Which Homer might without a blush rehearse,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's verse:
He matched their beauties, where they most excel;
Of love sung better, and of arms as well.

Vouchsafe, illustrious Ormond, to behold
What power the charms of beauty had of old;

Nor wonder if such deeds of arms were done,
Inspired by two fair eyes that sparkled like your own.

If Chaucer by the best idea wrought,
And poets can divine each other's thought,
The fairest nymph before his eyes he set ;
And then the fairest was Plantagenet ;
Who three contending princes made their prize,
And ruled the rival nations with her eyes ;
Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the noblest order gave the name.

Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conquests, and extend your own :
As when the stars, in their ethereal race,
At length have rolled around the liquid space,
At certain periods they resume their place,
From the same point of Heaven their course advance,
And move in measures of their former dance ;
Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
Restored in you, and the same place adorns :
Or you perform her office in the sphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new Platonic year.
O true Plantagenet, O race divine,
(For beauty still is fatal to the line,)
Had Chaucer lived that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you ;
Or had you lived to judge the doubtful right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight ;
And conquering Theseus from his side had sent
Your generous lord, to guide the Theban government.
Time shall accomplish that ; and I shall see
A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.
Already have the fates your path prepared,
And sure presage your future sway declared :
When westward, like the sun, you took your way,
And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the signal from the shore,
The ready Nereids heard, and swam before

To smooth the seas; a soft Etesian gale
 But just inspired, and gently swelled the sail;
 Portunus took his turn, whose ample hand
 Heaved up his lightened keel, and sunk the sand,
 And steered the sacred vessel safe to land.
 The land, if not restrained, had met your way,*
 Projected out a neck, and jutted to the sea.
 Hibernia, prostrate at your feet, adored
 In you, the pledge of her expected lord;
 Due to her isle; a venerable name;
 His father and his grandsire known to fame;
 Awed by that house, accustomed to command,
 The sturdy kerns in due subjection stand;
 Nor bear the reins in any foreign hand.
 At your approach, they crowded to the port;
 And scarcely landed, you create a court:
 As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run,
 For Venus is the promise of the sun.
 The waste of civil wars, their towns destroyed,
 Pales unhonoured, Ceres unemployed,
 Were all forgot; and one triumphant day
 Wiped all the tears of three campaigns away.
 Blood, rapines, massacres, were cheaply bought,
 So mighty recompence your beauty brought.
 As when the dove returning bore the mark
 Of earth restored to the long labouring ark,
 The relics of mankind, secure of rest,
 Oped every window to receive the guest,
 And the fair bearer of the message blessed:
 So, when you came, with loud repeated cries,
 The nation took an omen from your eyes,
 And God advanced his rainbow in the skies,
 To sign inviolable peace restored; [accord.
 The saints, with solemn shouts, proclaimed the new

* Scott notes this 'extravagant idea' as a repetition of the image in the *Astræ Redux*, which describes the land approaching the king on his return. They are essentially different. In the *Astræ Redux* (see Note on that poem i. 123) it is figurative; here it is literal.

When at your second coming you appear,
 (For I foretel that millenary year)
 The sharpened share shall vex the soil no more,
 But earth unbidden shall produce her store;
 The land shall laugh, the circling ocean smile,
 And Heaven's indulgence bless the holy isle.
 Heaven, from all ages, has reserved for you
 That happy clime, which venom never knew;
 Or if it had been there, your eyes alone
 Have power to chase all poison, but thcir own.

Now in this interval, which fate has cast
 Betwixt your future glories, and your past,
 This pause of power, 'tis Ireland's hour to mourn;
 While England celebrates your safe return,
 By which you seem the seasons to command,
 And bring our summers back to their forsaken land.

The vanquished isle our leisure must attend,
 Till the fair blessing we vouchsafe to send;
 Nor can we spare you long, though often we may lend.
 The dove was twice employed abroad, before
 The world was dried, and she returned no more.

Nor dare we trust so soft a messenger,
 New from her sickness, to that northern air;
 Rest here awhile your lustre to restore,
 That they may see you, as you shone before;
 For yet, the eclipse not wholly past, you wade
 Through some remains, and dimness of a shade.

A subject in his prince may claim a right,
 Nor suffer him with strength impaired to fight;
 Till force returns, his ardour we restrain,
 And curb his warlike wish to cross the main.

Now past the danger, let the learned begin
 The inquiry, where disease could enter in;
 How those malignant atoms forced their way, [prey,
 What in their faultless frame they found to make their
 Where every element was weighed so well,
 That Heaven alone, who mixed the mass, could tell
 Which of the four ingredients could rebel;

Who heaven's alternate beauty well display,
The blush of morning, and the milky way;
Whose face is paradise, but fenced from sin;
For God in either eye has placed a cherubin.

All is your lord's alone; even absent, he
Employs the care of chaste Penelope.
For him you waste in tears your widowed hours;
For him your curious needle paints the flowers;
Such works of old imperial dames were taught;
Such, for Ascanius, fair Eliza wrought.
The soft recesses of your hours improve
The three fair pledges of your happy love:
All other parts of pious duty done,
You owe your Ormond nothing but a son;
To fill in future times his father's place,
And wear the garter of his mother's race.

PALAMON AND ARCITE; OR, THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

IN days of old, there lived, of mighty fame,
A valiant prince, and Theseus was his name;
A chief, who more in feats of arms excelled,
The rising nor the setting sun beheld.
Of Athens he was lord; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown.
In Scythia with the warrior queen he strove,
Whom first by force he conquered, then by love;
He brought in triumph back the beauteous dame,
With whom her sister, fair Emilia, came.
With honour to his home let Theseus ride,
With love to friend, and fortune for his guide,
And his victorious army at his side.
I pass their warlike pomp, their proud array,
Their shouts, their songs, their welcome on the way;

But, were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy queen and hero knight;
The town besieged, and how much blood it cost
The female army, and the Athenian host;
The spousals of Hippolita the queen;
What tilts and tourneys at the feast were seen;
The storm at their return; the ladies' fear;
But these, and other things, I must forbear.
The field is spacious I design to sow,
With oxen far unfit to draw the plough:
The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waste my strength;
And trivial accidents shall be forborne,
That others may have time to take their turn;
As was at first enjoined us by mine host,
That he whose tale is best, and pleases most,
Should win his supper at our common cost.

And therefore where I left, I will pursue
This ancient story, whether false or true,
In hope it may be mended with a new.
The prince I mentioned, full of high renown,
In this array drew near the Athenian town;
When in his pomp and utmost of his pride,
Marching, he chanced to cast his eye aside,
And saw a choir of mourning dames, who lay
By two and two across the common way:
At his approach they raised a rueful cry,
And beat their breasts, and held their hands on high,
Creeping and crying, till they seized at last
His courser's bridle, and his feet embraced.

'Tell me,' said Theseus, 'what and whence you are,
And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds,
To meet my triumph in ill-omened weeds?
Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
With grief my pleasures, and pollute my joy?
Or are you injured, and demand relief?
Name your request, and I will ease your grief.'

The most in years of all the mourning train
Began ; but swoonèd first away for pain ;
Then scarce recovered spoke :—‘ Nor envy we
Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory ;
’Tis thine, O king, the afflicted to redress,
And fame has filled the world with thy success :
We wretched women sue for that alone,
Which of thy goodness is refused to none ;
Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
If what we beg be just, and we deserve relief ;
For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
But held the rank of sovereign queen before ;
Till, thanks to giddy Chance, which never bears,
That mortal bliss should last for length of years,
She cast us headlong from our high estate,
And here in hope of thy return we wait ;
And long have waited in the temple nigh,
Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.
But reverence thou the power whose name it bears ;
Relieve the oppressed, and wipe the widow’s tears.
I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
The wife of Capaneus, and once a queen ;
At Thebes he fell ; cursed be the fatal day !
And all the rest thou seest in this array,
To make their moan, their lords in battle lost
Before that town besieged by our confederate host.
But Creon, old and impious, who commands
The Theban city, and usurps the lands,
Denies the rites of funeral fires to those
Whose breathless bodies yet he calls his foes.
Unburned, unburied, on a heap they lie ;
Such is their fate, and such his tyranny ;
No friend has leave to bear away the dead,
But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are fed.’
At this she shrieked aloud ; the mournful train
Echoed her grief, and grovelling on the plain,
With groans, and hands upheld, to move his mind,
Besought his pity to their helpless kind.

The prince was touched, his tears began to flow,
And, as his tender heart would break in two,
He sighed; and could not but their fate deplore,
So wretched now, so fortunate before.
Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew,
And raising one by one the suppliant crew,
To comfort each, full solemnly he swore,
'That by the faith which knights to knighthood bore,
And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
He would not cease, till he revenged their wrongs;
That Greece should see performed what he declared;
And cruel Creon find his just reward.'
He said no more, but, shunning all delay,
Rode on; nor entered Athens on his way;
But left his sister and his queen behind,
And waved his royal banner in the wind,
Where, in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron car;
Red was his sword, and shield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead seemed to glow with fire;
Even the ground glittered where the standard flew,
And the green grass was dyed to sanguine hue.
High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquered Minotaur:
The soldiers shout around with generous rage,
And in that victory their own presage.
He praised their ardour; inly pleased to see
His host the flower of Grecian chivalry.
All day he marched, and all the ensuing night,
And saw the city with returning light.
The process of the war I need not tell,
How Theseus conquered, and how Creon fell;
Or after, how by storm the walls were won,
Or how the victor sacked and burned the town;
How to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of their lords in battle slain;
And with what ancient rites they were interred;
All these to fitter times shall be deferred:

I spare the widows' tears, their woeful cries,
And howling at their husbands' obsequies;
How Theseus at these funerals did assist,
And with what gifts the mourning dames dismissed.

Thus when the victor chief had Creon slain,
And conquered Thebes, he pitched upon the plain
His mighty camp, and, when the day returned,
The country wasted, and the hamlets burned,
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without control to strip and spoil the dead.

There, in a heap of slain, among the rest, [pressed
Two youthful knights they found, beneath a load op-
Of slaughtered foes, whom first to death they sent,
The trophies of their strength, a bloody monument.
Both fair, and both of royal blood they seemed,
Whom kinsmen to the crown the heralds deemed;
That day in equal arms they fought for fame;
Their swords, their shields, their surcoats were the same:
Close by each other laid, they pressed the ground,
Their manly bosoms pierced with many a grisly wound;
Nor well alive, nor wholly dead they were,
But some faint signs of feeble life appear;
The wandering breath was on the wing to part,
Weak was the pulse, and hardly heaved the heart.
These two were sister's sons; and Arcite one,
Much famed in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From these their costly arms the spoilers rent,
And softly both conveyed to Theseus' tent:
Whom known of Creon's line, and cured with care,
He to his city sent as prisoners of the war;
Hopeless of ransom, and condemned to lie
In durance, doomed a lingering death to die.

This done, he marched away with warlike sound,
And to his Athens turned with laurels crowned,
Where happy long he lived, much loved, and more
renowned.

But in a tower, and never to be loosed,
The woeful captive kinsmen are inclosed.

Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,
 Till once,—'twas on the morn of cheerful May,—
 The young Emilia, fairer to be seen
 Than the fair lily on the flowery green,
 More fresh than May herself in blossoms new,
 For with the rosy colour strove her hue,
 Waked, as her custom was, before the day,
 To do the observance due to sprightly May;
 For sprightly May commands our youth to keep
 The vigils of her night, and breaks their sluggard sleep;
 Each gentle breast with kindly warmth she moves;
 Inspires new flames, revives extinguished loves.
 In this remembrance, Emily, ere day,
 Arose, and dressed herself in rich array;
 Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair,
 Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair:
 A riband did the braided tresses bind,
 The rest was loose, and wantoned in the wind:
 Aurora had but newly chased the night,
 And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light,
 When to the garden walk she took her way,
 To sport and trip along in cool of day,
 And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.

At every turn, she made a little stand,
 And thrust among the thorns her lily hand
 To draw the rose; and every rose she drew,
 She shook the stalk, and brushed away the dew;
 Then party-coloured flowers of white and red
 She wove, to make a garland for her head:
 This done, she sung and carolled out so clear,
 That men and angels might rejoice to hear;
 Even wondering Philomel forgot to sing,
 And learned from her to welcome in the spring.*

* Chaucer's description of Emille may be cited to illustrate Dr. den's manner of rendering his original.

* This passeth yeer by ycer, and day by day,
 Till it fel oones in a morwe of May
 That Emille, that fairer was to seene
 Than is the lile on hire stalkes grene,

The tower, of which before was mention made,
 Within whose keep the captive knights were laid,
 Built of a large extent, and strong withal,
 Was one partition of the palace wall;
 The garden was inclosed within the square,
 Where young Emilia took the morning air.

It happened Palamon, the prisoner knight,
 Restless for woe, arose before the light,
 And, with his jailor's leave, desired to breathe
 An air more wholesome than the damps beneath.
 This granted, to the tower he took his way,
 Cheered with the promise of a glorious day;
 Then cast a languishing regard around,
 And saw, with hateful eyes, the temples crowned
 With golden spires, and all the hostile ground.
 He sighed, and turned his eyes, because he knew
 'Twas but a larger jail he had in view;
 Then looked below, and from the castle's height
 Beheld a nearer and more pleasing sight;

And freescher than the May with floures newe;
 For with the rose colour strof hire hewe,
 I not which was the fyner of hem two.
 Er it was day, as sche was wont to do,
 Sche was arisen, and al redy dight.
 For May wole have no sloggardye a night.
 The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
 And maketh him out of his sleepe sterte,
 And seith, 'Arys, and do thin observance.'
 This maked Emelye han remembrance
 To do honour to May, and for to ryse.
 I-clothed was sche fressh for to devyse.
 Hire yowle heer was browdid in a tresse,
 Byhynde hir bak, a yerde long I gesse.
 And in the gardyn at the sonne upriste
 Sche walketh up and down wher as hire liste.
 Sche gadereth floures, partye whyte and reede,
 To make a certeyn garland for hire heede,
 And as aungel hevenly sche song.'

These twenty-three lines are expanded to thirty-three by circumstantial additions. The whole tale is amplified in about the same proportion. Here and there, Dryden, nevertheless, tracks his original with verbal fidelity.

The garden, which before he had not seen,
In spring's new livery clad of white and green,
Fresh flowers in wide parterres, and shady walks
between.

This viewed, but not enjoyed, with arms across
He stood, reflecting on his country's loss;
Himself an object of the public scorn,
And often wished he never had been born.
At last, for so his destiny required,
With walking giddy, and with thinking tired,
He through a little window cast his sight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a scanty light;
But even that glimmering served him to descry
The inevitable charms of Emily.

Scarce had he seen, but, seized with sudden smart,
Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart;
Struck blind with overpowering light he stood,
Then started back amazed, and cried aloud.

Young Arcite heard; and up he ran with haste,
To help his friend, and in his arms embraced,
And asked him why he looked so deadly wan,
And whence, and how, his change of chere began?
Or who had done the offence? 'But if,' said he,
'Your grief alone is hard captivity,
For love of heaven with patience undergo
A cureless ill, since fate will have it so:
So stood our horoscope in chains to lie,
And Saturn in the dungeon of the sky,
Or other baleful aspect, ruled our birth,
When all the friendly stars were under earth;
Whate'er betides, by destiny 'tis done;
And better bear like men, than vainly seek to shun.'
'Nor of my bonds,' said Palamon again,
'Nor of unhappy planets I complain;
But when my mortal anguish caused my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either eye;
Pierced with a random shaft, I faint away,
And perish with insensible decay:

A glance of some new goddess gave the wound,
Whom, like Acteon, unaware I found.
Look how she walks along yon shady space!
Not Juno moves with more majestic grace,
And all the Cyprian queen is in her face.
If thou art Venus, (for thy charms confess
That face was formed in Heaven, nor art thou less;
Disguised in habit, undisguised in shape,)
Oh, help us captives from our chains to 'scape!
But if our doom be past in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathsome dungeon die,
Then be thy wrath appeased with our disgrace,
And show compassion to the Theban race,
Oppressed by tyrant power!—While yet he spoke
Arcite on Emily had fixed his look;
The fatal dart a ready passage found,
And deep within his heart infix'd the wound:
So that if Palamon were wounded sore,
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more:
Then from his inmost soul he sighed, and said,
'The beauty I behold has struck me dead:
Unknowingly she strikes; and kills by chance;
Poison is in her eyes, and death in every glance.
Oh, I must ask; nor ask alone, but move
Her mind to mercy, or must die for love.'

Thus Arcite: and thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his eyes.)
'Speakest thou in earnest, or in jesting vein?'
'Jesting,' said Arcite, 'suits but ill with pain.'
'It suits far worse,' said Palamon again,
And bent his brows, 'with men who honour weigh,
Their faith to break, their friendship to betray;
But worst with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinsman, and in arms my brother sworn.
Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one should be the common good of both;
One soul should both inspire, and neither prove
His fellow's hindrance in pursuit of love?

To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the bands.
This binds thee, then, to further my design,
As I am bound by vow to further thine:
Nor canst, nor dar'st thou, traitor, on the plain
Appeach my honour, or thine own maintain,
Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care depend.
And wouldst thou court my lady's love, which I
Much rather than release would choose to die?
But thou, false Arcite, never shall obtain
Thy bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:
For first my love began ere thine was born;
Thou as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound to assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deemed a pejured knight.'

Thus Palamon: but Arcite with disdain
In haughty language thus replied again:
'Forsworn thyself: the traitor's odious name
I first return, and then disprove thy claim.
If love be passion, and that passion nurst
With strong desires, I loved the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal inflamed
To worship, and a power celestial named?
Thine was devotion to the blest above,
I saw the woman and desired her love;
First owned my passion, and to thee commend
The important secret, as my chosen friend.
Suppose (which yet I grant not) thy desire
A moment elder than my rival fire;
Can chance of seeing first thy title prove?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for love?
Law is to things which to free choice relate;
Love is not in our choice, but in our fate;
Laws are but positive; love's power, we see,
Is Nature's sanction, and her first decree.
Each day we break the bond of human laws
For love, and vindicate the common cause.

Laws for defence of civil rights are placed,
 Love throws the fences down, and makes a general waste.
 Maids, widows, wives, without distinction fall;
 The sweeping deluge, love, comes on and covers all
 If then the laws of friendship I transgress,
 I keep the greater, while I break the less;
 And both are mad alike, since neither can possess.
 Both hopeless to be ransomed, never more
 To see the sun, but as he passes o'er.

‘Like Æsop’s hounds contending for the bone,
 Each pleaded right, and would be lord alone:
 The fruitless fight continued all the day;
 A cur came by, and snatched the prize away.
 As courtiers therefore jostle for a grant, [want;
 And when they break their friendship, plead their
 So thou, if fortune will thy suit advance,
 Love on, nor envy me my equal chance:
 For I must love, and am resolved to try
 My fate, or, failing in the adventure, die.’

Great was their strife, which hourly was renewed,
 Till each with mortal hate his rival viewed:
 Now friends no more, nor walking hand in hand;
 But when they met, they made a surly stand,
 And glared like angry lions as they passed,
 And wished that every look might be their last.

It chanced at length, Pirithous came to attend -
 This worthy Theseus, his familiar friend:
 Their love in early infancy began,
 And rose as childhood ripened into man,
 Companions of the war; and loved so well,
 That when one died, as ancient stories tell,
 His fellow to redeem him went to hell.

But to pursue my tale; to welcome home
 His warlike brother is Pirithous come:
 Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long since
 And honoured by this young Thessalian prince.
 Theseus, to gratify his friend and guest,
 Who made our Arcite’s freedom his request,

Restored to liberty the captive knight,
But on these hard conditions I recite :—
That if hereafter Arcite should be found
Within the compass of Athenian ground,
By day or night, or on whate'er pretence,
His head should pay the forfeit of the offence.
To this Pirithous for his friend agreed,
And on his promise was the prisoner freed.

Unpleased and pensive hence he takes his way,
At his own peril ; for his life must pay.
Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter fate,
Finds his dear purchase, and repents too late?
'What have I gained,' he said, 'in prison pent,
If I but change my bonds for banishment?
And banished from her sight, I suffer more
In freedom, than I felt in bonds before ;
Forced from her presence, and condemned to live,
Unwelcome freedom, and unthanked reprieve :
Heaven is not, but where Emilia abides,
And where she's absent, all is hell besides.
Next to my day of birth, was that accursed,
Which bound my friendship to Pirithous first :
Had I not known that prince, I still had been
In bondage, and had still Emilia seen :
For though I never can her grace deserve,
'Tis recompence enough to see and serve.
O Palamon, my kinsman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love attend !
Thine is the adventure ; thine the victory ;
Well has thy fortune turned the dice for thee :
Thou on that angel's face mayst feed thine eyes,
In prison, no ; but blissful paradise !
Thou daily seest that sun of beauty shine,
And lovest at least in love's extremest line.
I mourn in absence, love's eternal night ;
And who can tell but since thou hast her sight,
And art a comely, young, and valiant knight,

Fortune (a various power) may cease to frown,
And by some ways unknown thy wishes crown?
But I, the most forlorn of human kind,
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find;
But doomed to drag my loathsome life in care,
For my reward, must end it in despair.
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of fates
That governs all, and heaven that all creates,
Nor art, nor nature's hand can ease my grief;
Nothing but death, the wretch's last relief:
Then farewell youth, and all the joys that dwell,
With youth and life, and life itself, farewell!

'But why, alas! do mortal men in vain
Of fortune, fate, or Providence complain?
God gives us what he knows our wants require,
And better things than those which we desire:
Some pray for riches; riches they obtain;
But, watched by robbers, for their wealth are slain;
Some pray from prison to be freed; and come,
When guilty of their vows to fall at home;
Murdered by those they trusted with their life,
A favoured servant, or a bosom wife.
Such dear-bought blessings happen every day,
Because we know not for what things to pray.
Like drunken sots about the street we roam:
Well knows the sot he has a certain home,
Yet knows not how to find the uncertain place,
And blunders on, and staggers every pace.
Thus all seek happiness; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.
This is my case, who thought our utmost good
Was in one word of freedom understood:
The fatal blessing came: from prison free,
I starve abroad, and lose the sight of Emily.'

Thus Arcite; but if Arcite thus deplore
His sufferings, Palamon yet suffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He swells with wrath; he makes outrageous moan;

He frets, he fumes, he stares, he stamps the ground—
The hollow tower with clamours rings around :
With briny tears he bathed his fettered feet,
And dropped all o'er with agony of sweat.
'Alas!' he cried, 'I, wretch, in prison pine,
Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine :
Thou livest at large, thou drawest thy native air,
Pleased with thy freedom, proud of my despair :
Thou mayst, since thou hast youth and courage joined,
A sweet behaviour and a solid mind,
Assemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy disgrace ;
And after, by some treaty made, possess
Fair Emily, the pledge of lasting peace.
So thine shall be the beauteous prize, while I
Must languish in despair, in prison die.
Thus all the advantage of the strife is thine,
Thy portion double joys, and double sorrows mine.'

The rage of jealousy then fired his soul,
And his face kindled like a burning coal :
Now cold despair, succeeding in her stead,
To livid paleness turns the glowing red.
His blood, scarce liquid, creeps within his veins,
Like water which the freezing wind constrains.
Then thus he said :—'Eternal Deities,
Who rule the world with absolute decrees,
And write whatever time shall bring to pass,
With pens of adamant, on plates of brass ;
What, is the race of human kind your care
Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are ?
He with the rest is liable to pain,
And like the sheep, his brother-beast, is slain.
Cold, hunger, prisons, ills without a cure,
All these he must, and guiltless oft, endure ;
Or does your justice, power, or prescience fail ;
When the good suffer, and the bad prevail ?
What worse to wretched virtue could befall,
If fate or giddy fortune governed all ?

Nay, worse than other beasts is our estate;
Them, to pursue their pleasures, you create;
We, bound by harder laws, must curb our will,
And your commands, not our desires, fulfil;
Then, when the creature is unjustly slain,
Yet, after death at least, he feels no pain;
But man in life surcharged with woe before,
Not freed when dead, is doomed to suffer more.
A serpent shoots his sting at unaware;
An ambushed thief forelays a traveller;
The man lies murdered, while the thief and snake,
One gains the thickets, and one thrids the brake.
This let divines decide; but well I know,
Just, or unjust, I have my share of woe:
Through Saturn, seated in a luckless place,
And Juno's wrath, that persecutes my race;
Or Mars and Venus, in a quarrel, move
My pangs of jealousy for Arcite's love.'

Let Palamon oppressed in bondage mourn,
While to his exiled rival we return.
By this, the sun, declining from his height
The day had shortened to prolong the night:
The lengthened night gave length of misery,
Both to the captive lover and the free:
For Palamon in endless prison mourns,
And Arcite forfeits life if he returns;
The banished never hopes his love to see,
Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty;
'Tis hard to say who suffers greater pains;
One sees his love, but cannot break his chains;
One free, and all his motions uncontrolled,
Beholds whate'er he would, but what he would behold.
Judge as you please, for I will haste to tell
What fortune to the banished knight befel.

When Arcite was to Thebes returned again,
The loss of her he loved renewed his pain;
What could be worse, than never more to see
His life, his soul, his charming Emily?

He raved with all the madness of despair,
He roared, he beat his breast, he tore his hair.
Dry sorrow in his stupid eyes appears,
For wanting nourishment, he wanted tears;
His eyeballs in their hollow sockets sink,
Bereft of sleep; he loathes his meat and drink;
He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
As the pale spectre of a murdered man:
That pale turns yellow, and his face receives
The faded hue of sapless boxen leaves;
In solitary groves he makes his moan,
Walks early out, and ever is alone;
Nor, mixed in mirth, in youthful pleasures shares,
But sighs when songs and instruments he hears.
His spirits are so low, his voice is drowned,
He hears as from afar, or in a swoond,
Like the deaf murmurs of a distant sound:
Uncombed his locks, and squalid his attire,
Unlike the trim of love and gay desire;
But full of museful mopings, which presage
The loss of reason, and conclude in rage.

This when he had endured a year and more,
Now wholly changed from what he was before,
It happened once, that, slumbering as he lay,
He dreamed, (his dream began at break of day)
That Hermes o'er his head in air appeared,
And with soft words his drooping spirits cheered;
His hat, adorned with wings, disclosed the god,
And in his hand he bore the sleep-compelling rod;
Such as he seemed, when, at his sire's command,
On Argus' head he laid the snaky wand.
'Arise,' he said, 'to conquering Athens go,
There fate appoints an end to all thy woe.'
The fright awakened Arcite with a start,
Against his bosom bounced his heaving heart;
But soon he said, with scarce-recovered breath,
And thither will I go, to meet my death,
Sure to be slain; but death is my desire,
Since in Emilia's sight I shall expire.

By chance he spied a mirror while he spoke,
 And gazing there beheld his altered look;
 Wondering, he saw his features and his hue
 So much were changed, that scarce himself he knew.
 A sudden thought then starting in his mind,—
 ‘Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,
 The world may search in vain with all their eyes,
 But never penetrate through this disguise.
 Thanks to the change which grief and sickness give,
 In low estate I may securely live,
 And see, unknown, my mistress day by day.’
 He said; and clothed himself in coarse array;
 A labouring hind in show; then forth he went,
 And to the Athenian towers his journey bent:
 One squire attended in the same disguise,
 Made conscious of his master’s enterprise.
 Arrived at Athens, soon he came to court,
 Unknown, unquestioned in that thick resort:
 Proffering for hire his service at the gate,
 To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait.

So fair befel him, that for little gain
 He served at first Emilia’s chamberlain;
 And, watchful all advantages to spy,
 Was still at hand, and in his master’s eye;
 And as his bones were big, and sinews strong,
 Refused no toil that could to slaves belong;
 But from deep wells with engines water drew,
 And used his noble hands the wood to hew.
 He passed a year at least attending thus
 On Emily, and called Philostratus.
 But never was there man of his degree
 So much esteemed, so well beloved as he.
 So gentle of condition was he known,
 That through the court his courtesy was blown:
 All think him worthy of a greater place,
 And recommend him to the royal grace;
 That exercised within a higher sphere,
 His virtues more conspicuous might appear.

Thus by the general voice was Arcite praised,
And by great Theseus to high favour raised;
Among his menial servants first enrolled,
And largely entertained with sums of gold:
Besides what secretly from Thebes was sent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent.
This well employed, he purchased friends and fame,
But cautiously concealed from whence it came.
Thus for three years he lived with large increase,
In arms of honour, and esteem in peace;
To Theseus' person he was ever near,
And Theseus for his virtues held him dear.

BOOK THE SECOND.

WHILE Arcite lives in bliss, the story turns
Where hopeless Palamon in prison mourns.
For six long years immured, the captive knight
Had dragged his chains, and scarcely seen the light:
Lost liberty and love at once he bore;
His prison pained him much, his passion more:
Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wishes to be free from love.

But when the sixth revolving year was run,
And May within the Twins received the sun,
Were it by chance, or forceful destiny,
Which forms in causes first whate'er shall be,
Assisted by a friend, one moonless night,
This Palamon from prison took his flight:
A pleasant beverage he prepared before
Of wine and honey mixed with added store
Of opium; to his keeper this he brought,
Who swallowed unaware the sleepy draught,
And snored secure till morn, his senses bound
In slumber, and in long oblivion drowned.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert ere the rising sun.

A thick spread forest near the city lay,
 To this with lengthened strides he took his way,
 (For far he could not fly, and feared the day.)
 Safe from pursuit, he meant to shun the light,
 Till the brown shadows of the friendly night
 To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
 When to his country come, his next design
 Was all the Theban race in arms to join,
 And war on Theseus, till he lost his life,
 Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.

Thus while his thoughts the lingering day beguile,
 To gentle Arcite let us turn our style;
 Who little dreamt how nigh he was to care,
 Till treacherous fortune caught him in the snare.
 The morning lark, the messenger of day,
 Saluted in her song the morning gray;
 And soon the sun arose with beams so bright,
 That all the horizon laughed to see the joyous sight;
 He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
 And licks the drooping leaves, and dries the dew;
 When Arcite left his bed, resolved to pay
 Observance to the month of merry May,
 Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
 That scarcely prints the turf on which he trod:
 At ease he seemed, and prancing o'er the plains,
 Turned only to the grove his horse's reins,
 (The grove I named before,) and, lighting there,
 A woodbine garland sought to crown his hair;
 Then turned his face against the rising day,
 And raised his voice to welcome in the May:—

‘For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries
 If not the first, the fairest of the year: [wear,
 For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,
 And Nature’s ready pencil paints the flowers:
 When thy short reign is past, the feverish sun
 The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.
 So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,
 Nor goats with venom’d teeth thy tendrils bite,

As thou shalt guide my wandering feet to find
The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to bind.'

His vows addressed, within the grove he strayed,
Till Fate, or Fortune, near the place conveyed
His steps where secret Palamon was laid.
Full little thought of him the gentle knight,
Who, flying death, had there concealed his flight,
In brakes and brambles hid, and shunning mortal sight;
And less he knew him for his hated foe,
But feared him as a man he did not know.
But as it has been said of ancient years,
That fields are full of eyes, and woods have ears,
For this the wise are ever on their guard,
For, unforeseen, they say, is unprepared.
Uncautious Arcite thought himself alone,
And less than all suspected Palamon,
Who, listening, heard him, while he searched the grove,
And loudly sung his roundelay of love:
But on the sudden stopped, and silent stood,
As lovers often muse, and change their mood;
Now high as heaven, and then as low as hell,
Now up, now down, as buckets in a well:
For Venus, like her day, will change her cheer,
And seldom shall we see a Friday clear.
Thus Arcite having sung, with altered hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his bosom drew
A desperate sigh, accusing heaven and fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate:—
'Cursed be the day when first I did appear;
Let it be blotted from the calendar,
Lest it pollute the month, and poison all the year.
Still will the jealous queen pursue our race?
Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was:
Yet ceases not her hate; for all who come
From Cadmus are involved in Cadmus' doom.
I suffer for my blood: unjust decree!
That punishes another's crime on me,

In mean estate I serve my mortal foe,
The man who caused my country's overthrow.
This is not all; for Juno, to my shame,
Has forced me to forsake my former name;
Arcite I was, Philostratus I am.
That side of heaven is all my enemy:
Mars ruined Thebes: his mother ruined me.
Of all the royal race remains but one
Besides myself, the unhappy Palamon,
Whom Theseus holds in bonds, and will not free;
Without a crime, except his kin to me.
Yet these, and all the rest, I could endure;
But love's a malady without a cure:
Fierce Love has pierced me with his fiery dart.
He fires within, and hisses at my heart.
Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate pursue;
I suffer for the rest, I die for you.
Of such a goddess no time leaves record,
Who burned the temple where she was adored:
And let it burn, I never will complain,
Pleased with my sufferings, if you knew my pain.'

At this a sickly qualm his heart assailed,
His ears ring inward, and his senses failed.
No word missed Palamon of all he spoke;
But soon to deadly pale he changed his look:
He trembled every limb, and felt a smart,
As if cold steel had glided through his heart;
No longer stayed, but starting from his place,
Discovered stood, and showed his hostile face:—
'False traitor Arcite, traitor to thy blood,
Bound by thy sacred oath to seek my good,
Now art thou found forsworn, for Emily;
And dar'est attempt her love, for whom I die.
So hast thou cheated Theseus with a wile,
Against thy vow, returning to beguile
Under a borrowed name: as false to me,
So false thou art to him who set thee free.

But rest assured, that either thou shalt die,
Or else renounce thy claim in Emily;
For though unarmed I am, and (freed by chance)
Am here without my sword, or pointed lance,
Hope not, base man, unquestioned hence to go,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe.'

Arcite, who heard his tale, and knew the man,
His sword unsheathed, and fiercely thus began:
'Now, by the gods who govern Heaven above,
Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with love,
That word had been thy last; or in this grove
This hand should force thee to renounce thy love.
The surety which I gave thee, I defy:
Fool, not to know that love endures no tie,
And Jove but laughs at lovers' perjury.
Know, I will serve the fair in thy despite;
But since thou art my kinsman, and a knight,
Here, have my faith, tomorrow, in this grove,
Our arms shall plead the titles of our love:
And Heaven so help my right, as I alone
Will come, and keep the cause and quarrel both unknown,
With arms of proof both for myself and thee;
Choose thou the best, and leave the worst to me.
And, that a better ease thou mayest abide,
Bedding and clothes I will this night provide,
And needful sustenance, that thou mayest be
A conquest better won, and worthy me.'
His promise Palamon accepts; but prayed,
To keep it better than the first he made.
Thus fair they parted till the morrow's dawn;
For each had laid his plighted faith to pawn.

Oh Love! thou sternly dost thy power maintain,
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign;
Tyrants and thou all fellowship disdain.
This was in Arcite proved and Palamon,
Both in despair, yet each would love alone.
Arcite returned, and, as in honour tied,
His foe with bedding, and with food, supplied;

Then, ere the day, two suits of armour sought,
Which borne before him on his steed he brought:
Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure,
As might the strokes of two such arms endure.
Now, at the time, and in the appointed place,
The challenger and challenged, face to face,
Approach; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred changed their hue.
So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear,
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees:
And thinks, 'Here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight, or I.'
This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart;
A generous chillness seizes every part:
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the heart.

Thus pale they meet; their eyes with fury burn;
None greets, for none the greeting will return;
But in dumb surliness, each armed with care
His foe professed, as brother of the war:
Then both, no moment lost, at once advance
Against each other, armed with sword and lance:
They lash, they foin, they pass, they strive to bore
Their corslets, and the thinnest parts explore.
Thus two long hours in equal arms they stood,
And wounded, wound; till both were bathed in blood
And not a foot of ground had either got,
As if the world depended on the spot.
Fell Arcite like an angry tiger fared,
And like a lion Palamon appeared:
Or, as two boars whom love to battle draws,
With rising bristles, and with frothy jaws,
Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they wound
With grunts and groans the forest rings around.
So fought the knights, and fighting must abide,
Till fate an umpire sends their difference to decide.

The power that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heaven foresees,
Called Providence, or Chance, or Fatal Sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds, or makes, her way
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united power,
One moment can retard the appointed hour;
And some one day, some wondrous chance appears,
Which happened not in centuries of years:
For sure, whate'er we mortals hate, or love,
Or hope, or fear, depends on powers above:
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate the will.
In Theseus this appears; whose youthful joy
Was beasts of chase in forests to destroy;
This gentle knight, inspired by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds pursued his way.
Beside him rode Hippolita the queen,
And Emily attired in lively green,
With horns, and hounds, and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh:
And, as he followed Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the wood,
Where the two knights in cruel battle stood:
The lawn on which they fought, the appointed place
In which the uncoupled hounds began the chase.
Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay;
And thence dislodged, was wont to leave the wood,
For open fields, and cross the crystal flood.
Approached, and looking underneath the sun,
He saw proud Arcite, and fierce Palamon,
In mortal battle doubling blow on blow;
Like lightning flamed their fauchions to and fro,
And shot a dreadful gleam; so strong they strook,
There seemed less force required to fell an oak.

He gazed with wonder on their equal might,
Looked eager on, but knew not either knight.
Resolved to learn, he spurred his fiery steed
With goring rowels to provoke his speed.
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt them on the place;
And with his sword unsheathed, on pain of life
Commands both combatants to cease their strife;
Then with imperious tone pursues his threat:—
'What are you? why in arms together met?
How dares your pride presume against my laws,
As in a listed field to fight your cause,
Unasked the royal grant; no marshal by,
As knightly rites require; nor judge to try?'
Then Palamon, with scarce recovered breath,
Thus hasty spoke:—'We both deserve the death,
And both would die; for look the world around,
A pair so wretched is not to be found.
Our life's a load; encumbered with the charge,
We long to set the imprisoned soul at large.
Now, as thou art a sovereign judge, decree
The rightful doom of death to him and me;
Let neither find thy grace, for grace is cruelty.
Me first, oh, kill me first; and cure my woe;
Then sheath the sword of justice on my foe;
Or kill him first; for when his name is heard,
He foremost will receive his due reward.
Arcite of Thebes is he, thy mortal foe,
On whom thy grace did liberty bestow;
But first contracted, that, if ever found
By day or night upon the Athenian ground,
His head should pay the forfeit; see returned
The perjured knight, his oath and honour scorned:
For this is he, who, with a borrowed name
And proffered service, to thy palace came,
Now called Philostratus; retained by thee,
A traitor trusted, and in high degree,
Aspiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.

My part remains;—from Thebes my birth I own,
And call myself the unhappy Palamon.
Think me not like that man; since no disgrace
Can force me to renounce the honour of my race.
Know me for what I am: I broke my chain,
Nor promised I thy prisoner to remain:
The love of liberty with life is given,
And life itself the inferior gift of Heaven.
Thus without crime I fled; but farther know,
I, with this Arcite, am thy mortal foe:
Then give me death, since I thy life pursue;
For safeguard of thyself, death is my due.
More wouldst thou know? I love bright Emily,
And for her sake, and in her sight, will die:
But kill my rival too, for he no less
Deserves; and I thy righteous doom will bless,
Assured that what I lose, he never shall possess.
To this replied the stern Athenian prince,
And sourly smiled: 'In owning your offence
You judge yourself, and I but keep record
In place of law, while you pronounce the word.
Take your desert, the death you have decreed;
I seal your doom, and ratify the deed:
By Mars, the patron of my arms, you die.'

He said; dumb sorrow seized the standers-by.
The queen, above the rest, by nature good,
(The pattern formed of perfect womanhood)
For tender pity wept: when she began,
Through the bright quire the infectious virtue ran.
All dropt their tears, even the contended maid;
And thus, among themselves, they softly said:—
'What eyes can suffer this unworthy sight!
Two youths of royal blood, renowned in fight,
The mastership of Heaven in face and mind,
And lovers, far beyond their faithless kind:
See their wide streaming wounds; they neither came
For pride of empire, nor desire of fame:

Kings fight for kingdoms, madmen for applause ;
But love for love alone, that crowns the lover's cause.'
This thought, which ever bribes the beauteous kind,
Such pity wrought in every lady's mind,
They left their steeds, and prostrate on the place,
From the fierce king implored the offenders grace.

He paused a while, stood silent in his mood ;
For yet his rage was boiling in his blood :
But soon his tender mind the impression felt,
As softest metals are not slow to melt,
And pity soonest runs in softest minds :
Then reasons with himself ; and first he finds
His passion cast a mist before his sense,
And either made, or magnified the offence.
Offence? of what? to whom? who judged the cause?
The prisoner freed himself by nature's laws :
Born free, he sought his right ; the man he freed
Was perjured, but his love excused the deed :
Thus pondering, he looked under with his eyes,
And saw the women's tears, and heard their cries,
Which moved compassion more ; he shook his head,
And softly sighing to himself he said :— [draw

'Curse on the unpardoning prince, whom tears can
To no remorse ; who rules by lions' law ;
And deaf to prayers, by no submission bowed,
Rends all alike ; the penitent and proud !'
At this, with look serene, he raised his head ;
Reason resumed her place, and passion fled :
Then thus aloud he spoke :—' The power of love,
In earth, and seas, and air, and Heaven above,
Rules, unresisted, with an awful nod,
By daily miracles declared a god ;
He blinds the wise, gives eye-sight to the blind ;
And moulds and stamps anew the lover's mind.
Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in safety gone,
What hindered either in their native soil
At ease to reap the harvest of their toil?

But Love, their lord, did otherwise ordain,
And brought them in their own despite again,
To suffer death deserved; for well they know,
'Tis in my power, and I their deadly foe.
The proverb holds,—that to be wise and love,
Is hardly granted to the gods above.
See how the madmen bleed! behold the gains
With which their master, Love, rewards their pains!
For seven long years, on duty every day,
Lo! their obedience, and their monarch's pay!
Yet, as in duty bound, they serve him on;
And, ask the fools, they think it wisely done;
Nor ease, nor wealth, nor life itself, regard,
For 'tis their maxim,—Love is love's reward.
This is not all;—the fair, for whom they strove,
Nor knew before, nor could suspect their love,
Nor thought, when she beheld the fight from far,
Her beauty was the occasion of the war.
But sure a general doom on man is past,
And all are fools and lovers, first or last:
This, both by others and myself I know,
For I have served their sovereign long ago;
Oft have been caught within the winding train
Of female snares, and felt the lover's pain,
And learned how far the god can human hearts constrain.
To this remembrance, and the prayers of those,
Who for the offending warriors interpose,
I give their forfeit lives, on this accord,
To do me homage as their sovereign lord;
And as my vassals, to their utmost might,
Assist my person, and assert my right.'
This freely sworn, the knights their grace obtained;
Then thus the king his secret thought explained:
'If wealth, or honour, or a royal race,
Or each, or all, may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well deserve
A princess born; and such is she you serve:

For Emily is sister to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty known :
But should you combat till you both were dead.
Two lovers cannot share a single bed.
As, therefore, both are equal in degree,
The lot of both be left to destiny.
Now hear the award, and happy may it prove
To her, and him who best deserves her love.
Depart from hence in peace, and free as air,
Search the wide world, and where you please repair ;
But on the day when this returning sun
To the same point through every sign has run,
Then each of you his hundred knights shall bring,
In royal lists, to fight before the king ;
And then the knight, whom fate or happy chance
Shall with his friends to victory advance,
And grace his arms so far in equal fight,
From out the bars to force his opposite,
Or kill, or make him recreant on the plain,
The prize of valour and of love shall gain ;
The vanquished party shall their claim release,
And the long jars conclude in lasting peace.
The charge be mine to adorn the chosen ground,
The theatre of war, for champions so renowned ;
And take the patron's place of either knight,
With eyes impartial to behold the fight ;
And heaven of me so judge as I shall judge aright.
If both are satisfied with this accord,
Swear by the laws of knighthood on my sword.
Who now but Palamon exults with joy ?
And ravished Arcite seems to touch the sky :
The whole assembled troop was pleased as well,
Extol the award, and on their knees they fell
To bless the gracious king. The knights with leave
Departing from the place, his last commands receive
On Emily with equal ardour look,
And from her eyes their inspiration took.

From thence to Thebes' old walls pursue their way,
Each to provide his champions for the day.

It might be deemed, on our historian's part,
Or too much negligence, or want of art,
If he forgot the vast magnificence
Of royal Theseus, and his large expense.
He first inclosed for lists a level ground,
The whole circumference a mile around;
The form was circular; and all without
A trench was sunk, to moat the place about.
Within, an amphitheatre appeared,
Raised in degrees, to sixty paces reared:
That when a man was placed in one degree,
Height was allowed for him above to see.

Eastward was built a gate of marble white;
The like adorned the western opposite.
A nobler object than this fabric was,
Rome never saw, nor of so vast a space:
For, rich with spoils of many a conquered land,
All arts and artists Theseus could command,
Who sold for hire, or wrought for better fame;
The master-painters, and the carvers, came.
So rose within the compass of the year
An age's work, a glorious theatre.
Then o'er its eastern gate was raised above
A temple, sacred to the queen of love;
An altar stood below; on either hand
A priest with roses crowned, who held a myrtle wand.

The dome of Mars was on the gate opposed,
And on the north a turret was inclosed,
Within the wall of alabaster white,
And crimson coral for the queen of night,
Who takes in sylvan sports her chaste delight.

Within these oratories might you see
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery;
Where every figure to the life expressed
The godhead's power to whom it was addressed.

In Venus' temple on the sides were seen
The broken slumbers of enamoured men;
Prayers that even spoke, and pity seemed to call,
And issuing sighs that smoked along the wall;
Complaints, and hot desires, the lover's hell,
And scalding tears that wore a channel where they fell;
And all around were nuptial bonds, the ties
Of love's assurance, and a train of lies,
That, made in lust, conclude in perjuries;
Beauty, and Youth, and Wealth, and Luxury,
And sprightly Hope, and short-enduring Joy,
And Sorceries, to raise the infernal powers,
And Sigils framed in planetary hours;
Expense, and After-thought, and idle Care,
And Doubts of motley hue, and dark Despair;
Suspicious and fantastical Surmise,
And Jealousy suffused, with jaundice in her eyes,
Discolouring all she viewed, in tawny dressed,
Down-looked, and with a cuckow on her fist.
Opposed to her, on the other side advance
The costly feast, the carol, and the dance,
Minstrels, and music, poetry, and play,
And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
All these were painted on the wall, and more;
With acts and monuments of times before;
And others added by prophetic doom,
And lovers yet unborn, and loves to come:
For there the Idalian mount, and Citheron,
The court of Venus, was in colours drawn;
Before the palace gate, in careless dress,
And loose array, sat Portress Idleness;
There, by the fount, Narcissus pined alone;
There Samson was; with wiser Solomon;
And all the mighty names by love undone.
Medea's charms were there; Circean feasts,
With bowls that turned enamoured youths to beasts.
Here might be seen, that beauty, wealth, and wit,
And prowess, to the power of love submit;

The spreading snare for all mankind is laid,
And lovers all betray, and are betrayed.
The goddess' self some noble hand had wrought;
Smiling she seemed, and full of pleasing thought;
From ocean as she first began to rise,
And smoothed the ruffled seas, and cleared the skies,
She trod the brine, all bare below the breast,
And the green waves but ill concealed the rest:
A lute she held; and on her head was seen
A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green;
Her turtles fanned the buxom air above;
And, by his mother, stood an infant Love,
With wings unfledged; his eyes were banded o'er,
His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
Supplied with arrows bright and keen, a deadly store.

But in the dome of mighty Mars the red,
With different figures all the sides were spread;
This temple, less in form, with equal grace,
Was imitative of the first in Thrace;
For that cold region was the loved abode,
And sovereign mansion of the warrior god.
The landscape was a forest wide and bare,
Where neither beast, nor human kind repair;
The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,
And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.
A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly stubs, instead of trees, are found;
Or woods with knots and knares deformed and old;
Headless the most, and hideous to behold;
A rattling tempest through the branches went,
That stripped them bare, and one sole way they bent.
Heaven froze above, severe, the clouds congeal, [hail.
And through the crystal vault appeared the standing
Such was the face without: a mountain stood
Threatening from high, and overlooked the wood:
Beneath the lowering brow, and on a bent,
The temple stood of Mars armipotent;

The frame of burnished steel, that cast a glare
 From far, and seemed to thaw the freezing air.
 A strait long entry to the temple led,
 Blind with high walls, and horror over head;
 Thence issued such a blast, and hollow roar,
 As threatened from the hinge to heave the door;
 In through that door, a northern light there shone;
 'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.
 The gate was adamant; eternal frame! [came,
 Which, hewed by Mars himself, from Indian quarries
 The labour of a God; and all along
 Tough iron plates were clenched to make it strong.
 A tun about was every pillar there;
 A polished mirror shone not half so clear.
 There saw I how the secret felon wrought,
 And treason labouring in the traitor's thought,
 And midwife Time the ripened plot to murder brought.
 There the red Anger dared the pallid Fear;
 Next stood Hypocrisy, with holy leer;
 Soft smiling, and demurely looking down,
 But hid the dagger underneath the gown;
 The assassinating wife, the household fiend;
 And far the blackest there, the traitor-friend.
 On the other side there stood Destruction bare;
 Unpunished Rapine, and a waste of war;
 Contest with sharpened knives, in cloisters drawn,
 And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.
 Loud menaces were heard, and foul disgrace,
 And bawling infamy, in language base;
 Till sense was lost in sound, and silence fled the place.
 The slayer of himself yet saw I there,
 The gore congealed was clotted in his hair;
 With eyes half closed, and gaping mouth he lay,
 And grim, as when he breathed his sullen soul away
 In midst of all the dome, Misfortune sat,
 And gloomy Discontent, and fell Debate,

And Madness laughing in his ireful mood;
And armed complaint on theft; and cries of blood.
There was the murdered corpse, in covert laid,
And violent death in thousand shapes displayed:
The city to the soldiers' rage resigned;
Successless wars, and poverty behind:
Ships burnt in fight, or forced on rocky shores,
And the rash hunter strangled by the boars:
The new-born babe by nurses overlaid;
And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.
All ills of Mars his nature, flame, and steel;
The gasping charioteer, beneath the wheel
Of his own car; the ruined house that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls:
The whole division that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in steel for gains,
Were there: the butcher, armourer, and smith,
Who forges sharpened fauchions, or the scythe.
The scarlet conquest on a tower was placed,
With shouts, and soldiers' acclamations graced:
A pointed sword hung threat'ning o'er his head,
Sustained but by a slender twine of thread.
There saw I Mars his ides, the Capitol,
The seer in vain foretelling Cæsar's fall;
The last triumvirs, and the wars they move,
And Anthony, who lost the world for love.
These, and a thousand more, the fane adorn;
Their fates were painted ere the men were born,
All copied from the Heavens, and ruling force
Of the red star, in his revolving course.
The form of Mars high on a chariot stood,
All sheathed in arms, and gruffly looked the god;
Two geomantic figures were displayed
Above his head, a warrior and a maid,
One when direct, and one when retrograde.

Tired with deformities of death, I haste
To the third temple of Diana chaste.

A sylvan scene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the sides, and on the midst a lawn ;
The silver Cynthia, with her nymphs around,
Pursued the flying deer, the woods with horns resound :
Calisto there stood manifest of shame,
And, turned a bear, the northern star became :
Her son was next, and, by peculiar grace,
In the cold circle held the second place ;
The stag Acteon in the stream had spied
The naked huntress, and for seeing, died ;
His hounds, unknowing of his change, pursue
The chase, and their mistaken master slew.
Peneian Daphne too was there to see
Apollo's love before, and now his tree.
The adjoining fane the assembled Greeks expressed,
And hunting of the Caledonian beast.
Oenides' valor, and his envied prize ;
The fatal power of Atalanta's eyes ;
Diana's vengeance on the victor shown,
The murd'ress mother, and consuming son ;
The Volscian queen extended on the plain ;
The treason punished, and the traitor slain.
The rest were various huntings, well designed,
And savage beasts destroyed, of every kind.
The graceful goddess was arrayed in green ;
About her feet were little beagles seen, [queen.
That watched with upward eyes the motions of their
Her legs were buskined, and the left before
In act to shoot, a silver bow she bore,
And at her back a painted quiver wore.
She trod a waxing moon, that soon would wane,
And, drinking borrowed light, be filled again ;
With downcast eyes, as seeming to survey
The dark dominions, her alternate sway.
Before her stood a woman in her throes,
And called Lucina's aid, her burden to disclose.
All these the painter drew with such command,
That Nature snatched the pencil from his hand,

Ashamed and angry that his art could feign,
And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
Theseus beheld the fanes of every god,
And thought his mighty cost was well bestowed.
So princes now their poets should regard;
But few can write, and fewer can reward.
The theatre thus raised, the lists enclosed.
And all with vast magnificence disposed,
We leave the monarch pleased, and haste to bring
The knights to combat, and their arms to sing.

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